

# **Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Commission – Lead Officer Working Group**

## **Note of Lead Officer Working Group Meeting held on 16 February 2022, 2pm – 4pm via Microsoft Teams**

### **Attendees**

Caitriona McAuley, Head of Service (Economic Development and Regeneration), North Ayrshire Council (Chair)  
Emma McMullen, Senior Manager – Economic Policy, North Ayrshire Council  
David McDowall, Interim Head of Planning and Economic Development, East Ayrshire Council  
Sarah Leslie, HR Director, NHS Ayrshire and Arran  
Derek Frew, Ayrshire Divisions Partnership Lead Officer, Police Scotland  
Linda West, Strategic Lead for Representation, Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA) (in place of Norah Williamson, VASA)  
Paul Zealey, Skills Planning Lead, Skills Development Scotland (First hour only)  
Michael Breen, Vice Principle, Ayrshire College  
Vikki Kewney, Project Manager, Scottish Enterprise  
Craig Watt, Team Leader, Scottish Enterprise  
Neil Shearer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (substitute for Paul Blackwood)  
Margaret Scott, CWB Business Locality Officer, South Ayrshire Council (substitute for Mark Greaves)

### **Secretariat**

Mhairi Paterson, Community Wealth Building Coordinator, North Ayrshire Council

### **Apologies**

Kaileigh Brown, Co-Leader - Third Sector, The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT)  
James Thomson, Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates, Ayrshire College  
Donna Neilson, Workforce Planning Manager, East Ayrshire Council  
Allison Craig, Strategic Manager, Ayrshire Growth Deal  
Paul Blackwood, Workforce Planning Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service  
Mark Greaves, Places Coordinator, South Ayrshire Council

## **1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the Lead Officer Working Group (LOWG) for the Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Commission and noted apologies submitted.

## **2. Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting on 5 November were agreed with no issues raised.

### 3. CWB Commission

Mhairi Paterson provided a summary of the CWB Commission meeting which took place on 11 January. The Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth, Mr Tom Arthur, had been invited to the meeting, however due to a last minute change in circumstances, Mr Arthur was unable to attend. Scottish Government officers attended the meeting which covered the context of CWB in Ayrshire, a discussion on a CWB Act and an overview of Anchor Institution progress against the Anchor Charter pledges. Sarah Deas (Chair of the North Ayrshire CWB Expert Advisory Panel) provided feedback from the Panel on Anchor Charter progress which had been discussed at the Panel meeting in November. It was observed that partners are still in the early stages of Anchor collaboration but have a great foundation to build upon. The Panel feedback was based around three key elements:

- **Setting ambition:** Need to be ambitious in our endeavours, set targets to ensure progress can be measured. Vision is important and needs to recognise the need for local level systems change.
- **Partnership working is key:** We need to embrace new ways of thinking and working to ensure sustainable change. Need to recognise complementary skills and resources across the network. E.g. CDS and TSI working with each Anchor to support and develop plural forms of ownership
- **Move from discussion into Action:** Implementation of activities is key and should be the focus. Given the wide remit, it is important to prioritise activities and track progress.

It was noted the next Commission meeting will take place on 17 March and it has been confirmed Mr Tom Arthur will attend. He is interested in learning about the strategic significance of CWB in Ayrshire and for Anchor Institutions as well as examples of activities and the challenges faced.

Caitriona McAuley asked attendees to confirm they were in agreement with the feedback from Sarah Deas. It was agreed that discussion of a CWB vision and targets for Anchors would be taken forward to the next meeting of the LOWG.

### 4. Scottish Enterprise – Land & Assets Workstream Update

Vikki Kewney, workstream lead for Land and Assets gave an update on recent activity. A workstream meeting was held on 10 February 2022. Terms of Reference for the group have been approved and a map of surplus and under-utilised assets has been collated into a Geographic Information System (GIS) to act as a starting point for identifying potential opportunities for maximising the use of underutilised local assets. Workstream officers have identified the following activities as key areas of focus for the coming weeks:

- Development of an Action Plan for workstream activities
- Improving the consistency and standardisation of data used to populate the GIS map such as clarifying whether an asset is fully surplus or has partial unused capacity and asset floor-space and condition.
- Analysis of the processes which Anchors use to capture demand for underutilised assets including from: the public, communities, Third Sector organisations, and local

businesses. Recommendations will be considered where processes do not exist or could be enhanced or improved.

A discussion followed with the following points raised:

- It was noted that once an action plan has been agreed, a resource will be required to take this forward into delivery phase. This was related to the feedback from Sarah Deas that partners need to work closely together to add resource and move from discussion into action.
- The workstream was encouraged to consider the wider local and national policy landscape which may influence or constrain opportunities relating to the maximisation of land and assets.
- It was noted that in relation to assessing demand for assets, the Third Sector Interface has a role to play, however each of the TSI's operate differently in each local authority and some already have close links with community learning and development teams.
- Examples of co-location and partnership working already taking place was noted by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service where the service is co-locating with the Scottish Ambulance Service in Ardrossan and considering opportunities in Dregghorn. SFRS are working with East Ayrshire CVO to establish spaces for community growing, cooking and a Men's Shed within their premises in Kilmarnock.
- It was noted that privately owned land poses a challenges for councils and community ownership, particularly as the value of land increases.
- It was noted that Police Scotland assets within Ayrshire are currently under review.
- The North Ayrshire Council [Repurposing Property Grant Fund](#) was noted as an example for considering the feasibility of under-utilised assets for alternatives uses.

## **5. Ayrshire College – Fair Employment Workstream Update**

An update on the progress of the Fair Employment workstream being led by Ayrshire College was provided. Two meetings have taken place in the past few months with another scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> February. The results of a baseline questionnaire of current employment practices and policies across the Anchor Institutions highlighted overall the Anchors are Fair Work employers however there were some gaps in good practice which can be improved e.g. Ayrshire College promotion of local credit unions. Workstream officers have identified a shared interest in focussing on improving recruitment practices within Anchors to ensure recruitment is inclusive and accessible to all. Next steps for the workstream will consider a proposal to establish sub-groups for key priorities across recruitment, apprenticeships and volunteering.

A discussion followed with key points raised:

- It was noted that East Ayrshire Council have significant proposals for apprenticeships which should be considered within the workstream.
- In relation to the value added through Anchor collaboration, it was suggested that Anchors could consider a collaborative model for childcare for example looking at opportunities for shared assets across Ayrshire to help provide childcare support. This point was linked to the need to understand the barriers people face in accessing and staying in employment.
- It was noted the Inclusive Growth Diagnostic for Ayrshire provides useful information on the local constraints which prevent inclusive growth in Ayrshire (which include

health, local jobs, childcare, digital skills). It also identifies priority groups such as women and lone parents which have guided the development of targeted programmes such as Skills for Life in North Ayrshire.

- The role of Credit Unions should be promoted to staff and communities by Anchors

**ACTION FOR ALL:** Caitriona McAuley asked the Anchors to consider two or three actions to be taken forward across all workstreams by their respective organisations.

### **1. Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Fund project update**

An update on the Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building project was provided by Jude King, Programme Manager for the project. The project is a three year programme and over its lifespan, will develop an Ayrshire approach to CWB that will enhance wealth, ensure fair and meaningful work and create successful places. The programme has 3 key dimensions to enable successful delivery:

- CWB Locality Officers – 3 Locality Officers per local authority.
- Fair Work Ayrshire (FWA) – Programme Manager and 2 Fair Work Officers. engaging local employers to improve recruitment processes and provide fair work
- Business Support Fund - £1m split between the 3 local authorities to support the work of the locality officers and the principles of the CWB Pillars.

An overview of the management structure and staff involved in the programme was provided, with a note that 3 CWB Officers are currently being recruited by North and East Ayrshire Councils. Two Fair Work Ayrshire Officers are also being recruited.

All 3 Ayrshire local authorities have engaged local businesses through the programme providing one to one support, holding CWB pillar focussed workshops and providing financial assistance through the CWB Business Support Fund.

The Fair Work Ayrshire Programme Manager has opened the programme for business referrals and the numbers of referrals handles is expected to rise as the recruitment of additional Fair Work Officers take up post.

The project update was welcomed by the group and regular progress updates were encouraged.

## **6. Organisational Development support – discussion and next steps**

Caitriona McAuley noted that at the previous LOWG meeting there was a common need to socialise the concept of CWB throughout the respective Anchor organisations. To support this, an in-person workshop for the next meeting of the LOWG was proposed with opportunity to share lessons. Sarah Leslie, Linda West and Margaret Scott offered to provide support to planning the workshop.

## **7. Regional Economic Strategy**

Emma McMullen provided an update on the development of a Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for Ayrshire. Following the signing of the Ayrshire Growth Deal in November 2020, the Ayrshire Regional Economic Partnership agreed to progress the development of an ambitious, evidence-based strategy. A tender process is currently underway to identify suitable

consultant(s) to produce a strategy focussed on creating an inclusive wellbeing economy for the region and accompanying two-year action plan. A separate commission has been advertised for a suitably experienced consultant to embed CWB principles into the RES by working closely with the consultants appointed.

The significance of the RES in relation to underpinning future funding opportunities was noted. The successful consultants will be expected to undertake a significant engagement process across all levels of the Ayrshire community, with this process considered to be as valuable as the final strategy document itself. Updates on the progress of the RES will be provided at future LOWG meetings.

## **8. Next Steps and future agenda items**

Following discussions during the meeting, it is expected the next meeting will take place in person.

## **9. AOB**

No items raised.