

North Ayrshire Council

Community Wealth Building (CWB) Commission – Lead Officer Working Group

Note of Meeting of Lead Officer Working Group held on 30 August 2023

Attendees

Louise Kirk, Interim Head of Service Economic Development and Regeneration, North Ayrshire Council (Chair)

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

Mhairi Paterson, Economic Policy Manager (CWB), North Ayrshire Council

Ian Burgoyne, Depute Head of Education (Equity, Inclusion & Employability), East Ayrshire Council

David Alexander, Service Lead – Procurement, South Ayrshire Council

Paul Blackwood, Group Commander Prevention and Protection, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Graham Saunders, Interim Strategic Manager and Programme Manager, Ayrshire Growth Deal

Lynn Sproat, Senior Programme Manager Community Wealth Building, NHS Ayrshire and Arran

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

Mags Watson, Strategic Manager Economic Development (Interim), East Ayrshire Council

Mark Greaves, Local Places Coordinator, South Ayrshire Council

Margaret Scott, CWB Officer, South Ayrshire Council

Guests

Tracy Murray, East Ayrshire Council

Kimberley Guthrie, Scotland's Towns Partnership

Kevin Rennie, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Apologies

Kirstin Dickson, Director of Transformation and Sustainability, NHS Ayrshire and Arran

David Davidson, Assistant Principal – Human Resources and Organisational Development, Ayrshire College

Fiona Fawdry, East Ayrshire CVO

David McDowall, Head of Economic Growth, East Ayrshire Council

Paul Zealey, Skills Development Scotland

Derek Frew, Ayrshire Division Partnership Lead Officer, Police Scotland

Angela McWhinnie, Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA)

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

1. Welcome, Apologies and Minutes from the Previous Meeting

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

An error was noted in the minutes of the previous meeting on 22 May 2023 relating to the NSS Community Benefit Gateway. This was amended and a revised draft of the minutes subsequently shared with the group.

2. CWB Commission Update

It was noted that the previous meeting of the CWB Commission was held on 14 June and included standard updates on progress of the LOWG, Regional Economic Strategy and AGD CWB Programme. There was an extended item to discuss CWB and Climate action and the opportunities for aligning CWB to climate related projects. Examples of integrating CWB and Climate Action included the Isle of Lewis community wind turbine, housing retrofit as an economic development opportunity and Samso Island in Denmark as the world's first renewable energy island.

3. Ayrshire Growth Deal update

Graham Saunders, AGD Strategic Manager, gave an overview of Ayrshire Growth Deal projects currently underway. It was noted that a Benefits Realisation Plan has been developed and aims to capture the wider economic, environmental, social and other beneficial impacts of AGD activities within Ayrshire. Within this there are indicators related to the delivery of Community Benefits as part of procurement processes.

4. Scotland Loves Local Programme

Kimberley Guthrie from Scotland's Towns Partnership introduced the role of Scotland's Towns Partnership and explained the purpose of the Scotland Loves Local (SLL) campaign. Born out of a need to drive economic recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic, SLL aims to grow local economies by encouraging people to shop and spend time locally. The Scotland Loves Local Gift Card aims to provide direct support for local businesses and communities which Kimberley advised can be a versatile tool for driving local wealth, but also supporting low income households, rewarding or incentivizing staff and increasing town centre footfall. An overview of enabling action within Scotland's Improvement Districts was provided, including an example of Possilpark's Remaking Saracen as an example of businesses and communities coming together as part of a Community Improvement District to improve the local area.

Tracy Murray from East Ayrshire Council gave an overview of their approach to using the SLL Gift Card. It was noted that the best way to drive engagement and uptake of the card within businesses is through "boots on the ground" which although time and resource intensive yielded the most results. A series of marketing campaigns helped ensure the public were aware of the scheme. Wider council services and external partners were engaged as part of the process with some businesses using the card to incentivise staff. East Ayrshire Council was the first to disburse financial support funds through the gift card and in

December 2020 included a £20 gift card within food boxes. Evidence demonstrated that it helped support local businesses while removing stigma of receiving financial support and encouraged responsible spending such as purchasing food, school clothes and car maintenance.

Discussion points included:

- NHS Ayrshire and Arran are currently preparing a CWB Strategy which will include encouraging staff to shop locally and ethically.
- The Scotland Loves Local Gift card was considered important to get buy-in and engagement from businesses. There is also alignment with the AGD CWB Programme KPIs as it can help facilitate and encourage consortium cooperatives.
- A question was raised about the mixture of businesses who have signed up for the card and it was noted that within East Ayrshire there are a wide range of businesses who have signed up and see value in using the card.
- Potential for the card to be used by employers as a staff benefit such as recognising long staff service.

5. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Non-Domestic Incident Response Pilot

Paul Blackwood and Kevin Rennie from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) gave an overview of the Fire Safety Enforcement Work undertaken by the SFRS. The Post Non-Domestic Incident Response initiative forms part of this work and aims to support and proactively protect local businesses by advising them of fires within similar businesses and reminding them of their duty to undertake fire risk assessments.

It was noted that non-domestic fires can have significant impacts on the local economy including financial loss, damaged goods, loss of premises or customers and have a wider ripple effect including loss of jobs or reduced wages for staff. It can also result in significant damage to land and property assets, therefore reducing the economic productivity of the area.

Points raised during discussion include:

- A flyer about the initiative could be included within information packs which councils provide to all new business start-ups.
- Acknowledged the role of SFRS as an anchor organisation using its role to protect and grow the local economy.
- An opportunity for SFRS to link with pan-Ayrshire networking events to raise awareness.

6. Fair Employment Workstream Update

Ian Burgoyne of East Ayrshire Council gave an update on the Fair Employment workstream. It was noted that the Recruitment sub-group had met three times where meaningful exchanges and information sharing had taken place however there was a need for a more joined-up approach and clarity on sub-group outputs. Meetings of the Apprenticeship group had taken place although the Volunteering sub-group had been unable to meet due to capacity issues. At the meeting of the Fair Employment workstream on 1 August, it was proposed to host a workstream development session in September to allow members to meet in person and discuss how sub-groups can operate more effectively.

7. Procurement Workstream Update

David Alexander from South Ayrshire Council gave an update on the progress of the Procurement Workstream. David outlined the procurement spend figures for 2022/23 noting how much had been spent within Ayrshire by Ayrshire anchor institutions. It was noted that all three local authorities had increased their Pan-Ayrshire procurement spend in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 figures. A similar trend was also noted in relation to number of Pan-Ayrshire suppliers used. The figures demonstrate the improved outcomes associated with a drive to increasing procurement spend in Ayrshire.

8. Regional Economic Strategy Update

Emma McMullen from North Ayrshire Council provided an update regarding the Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy. It was noted that a delivery plan is being drafted and will be launched during Ayrshire Business Week at the start of October.

9. Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Programme update

Jude King, Programme Manager for the AGD CWB Programme provided a brief programme update and noted that the total number of business engaged was close to exceeding targets for the programme. Details were shared of a pan-Ayrshire CWB event being held in Troon, South Ayrshire on the 27th September as part of the AGD CWB Programme.

10. Next Steps and future agenda items

Potential future agenda items included:

- An opportunity to drill down into more procurement data at a future meeting.
- NHS Ayrshire and Arran present on their CWB Strategy when appropriate.
- Members to notify Mhairi Paterson of any future agenda items.

11. AOB

None.