

Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Commission – Lead Officer Working Group

Note of Lead Officer Working Group Meeting held on 5 November 2021, 2pm – 4pm via Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Caitriona McAuley, Head of Service (Economic Development and Regeneration), North Ayrshire Council (Chair)
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
Sarah Smillie, CWB Business Locality Officer, South Ayrshire Council
Margaret Scott, CWB Business Locality Officer, South Ayrshire Council
Mark Greaves, Places Coordinator, South Ayrshire Council
Linda West, Strategic Lead for Representation, Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA) (in place of Norah Williamson, VASA)
Paul Blackwood, Workforce Planning Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Vikki Kewney, Project Manager, Scottish Enterprise
Helen McCabe, East Ayrshire CVO (substituting for Fiona Fawdry, Chief Executive East Ayrshire EVO)

Secretariat

Mhairi Paterson, Community Wealth Building Coordinator, North Ayrshire Council

Apologies

Julie McLachlan, Senior Manager – Economic Policy, North Ayrshire Council
Kaileigh Brown, Co-Leader - Third Sector, The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT)
Theresa Correia, Scottish Enterprise
Paul Zealey, Skills Planning Lead, Skills Development Scotland
Michael Breen, Vice Principle, Ayrshire College
James Thomson, Director of Finance, Student Funding and Estates, Ayrshire College
Donna Neilson, Workforce Planning Manager, East Ayrshire Council
Craig Watt, Team Leader, Scottish Enterprise
Allison Craig, Strategic Manager, Ayrshire Growth Deal
Theo Leijser, Service Lead Economy and Regeneration, 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 25 August were agreed with no issues raised.

3. Ayrshire College Fair Employment Workstream Update

Michael Breen, lead for the Fair Employment workstream, was unable to attend the meeting however Mhairi Paterson provided an update on the workstream activities. A baseline questionnaire of current employment practices across the Anchor Institutions is currently being gathered and analysed. It was noted by members of the Fair Employment workstream there is an interest in focussing on improving recruitment practices within Anchors to ensure recruitment is inclusive and accessible to all. A further workstream meeting to explore and share good recruitment practice will take place in December.

It was noted that in October all three Ayrshire Integration Joint Boards had signed the Ayrshire Anchor Charter. This is a positive step forward and was noted that due to HSCPs employing significant numbers of people and the recent recruitment challenges, participation in the Fair Employment workstream would be welcomed.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service noted attendance at a Community Justice Ayrshire Partnership event on 30th November. The event will focus on increasing employment opportunities for people with convictions in Ayrshire, with SFRS now adopting this partnership approach as part of their recruitment practice.

4. Scottish Enterprise Land & Assets Workstream update

Vikki Kewney delivered a presentation on the progress of the Land & Assets workstream. In June and July there was good progress in engaging with workstream members. A list of surplus assets is being sought from each of the Anchors, which will be collated into a GIS (Geographic Information System) to act as a baseline for identifying potential opportunities for maximising underutilised local assets. Once the map has been created the workstream will consider collaborative opportunities to pursue the alternative use of assets and will develop a workplan of activities in early 2022.

The following points were noted:

- Rather than exclusively vacant assets, under-utilised assets should also be considered within the mapping process to ensure opportunities are not missed.
- Would there be opportunities to consider the repurposing of retail units?
- Council Business Support teams could feed into the work to determine whether there are unmet needs from the business community and link up with opportunities for use of vacant or under utilised assets.
- Recently there has been examples of vacant town centre buildings used to house Covid-19 vaccination centres. It could be there will be a future requirement to make vaccination centres permanent and alternative use of vacant buildings in town centres would ensure these are closer to communities.
- SFRS noted plans to co-locate with the Scottish Ambulance Service at some sites. There were also opportunities to establish community food gardens at some sites.

- The Land & Assets needs of the 3rd Sector was raised. At present there is no established way of systematically capturing these needs. It was noted that the research undertaken by TACT in North Ayrshire to scope the capacity of the 3rd Sector will focus initially on procurement, however this is something which could be subsequently linked to land & assets opportunities. It was suggested the 3 Ayrshire TSIs meet to discuss how 3rd Sector needs could be linked to opportunities identified by the Land & Assets workstream

ACTION – Vikki Kewney and Craig Watt to look at incorporating under-utilised assets into the scope of the workstream to avoid missing potential opportunities.

ACTION – Three Ayrshire TSIs to meet and consider options for linking 3rd Sector needs to opportunities identified by the Land & Assets workstream.

5. Progress on Anchor Charter Pledges

Ayrshire CWB Anchor Charter was launched in October 2020 during Challenge Poverty Week. The purpose of the Charter is to encourage Ayrshire Anchor Institutions to support the principles of CWB by committing to a number of pledges aligned to the five pillars of CWB and a sixth “pillar” of Climate Action. When the Charter was launched it was agreed progress on all Charter pledges would be evaluated on an annual basis. Earlier in October 2021, marking one year since the launch of the Charter, all Anchor Charter signatories completed a template outlining progress against the Anchor Charter pledges. Although Police Scotland have not yet signed the Charter, officers have undertaken a partial progress update against the pledges. The templates completed by Anchors were shared with members of the LOWG ahead of the meeting.

Mhairi Paterson expressed thanks to organisations who had completed the template. The templates should be considered an opportunity to learn more about Anchors’ activities and the potential for collaborating to add value and overcome mutual challenges.

In summary of the progress, it was acknowledged that Anchors are at different stages in development of the pledges, particularly in relation to some of the pillars including Financial Power and Plural Ownership. Some Anchors face particular barriers or challenges associated with these pillars due to the nature and purpose of the organisation. For example Police Scotland, Ayrshire College and NHS Ayrshire & Arran cannot approach Plural Ownership in the same way in which the Councils do as they do not have business development teams.

It was noted that Anchors representing the Third Sector are approaching the CWB pillars from a different perspective than other institutions. This involves working in close collaboration with the TSI’s to ensure Third Sector organisations are prepared and supported to benefit from CWB opportunities created by the other Anchors.

Points of discussion included:

- Embedding CWB throughout the organisation is complex, challenging and takes time. It was acknowledged that socialising a CWB culture change is common to each Anchor Institution and there was interest in exploring this further with Organisational Development teams to collaborate and share learning.

- The sharing of procurement waveplans could be helpful to increase the visibility of forthcoming tender opportunities and preparation required.
- There is a need for the TSIs to be upskilled to ensure there is a consistent approach to supporting the 3rd Sector.
- It is important to ensure that work undertaken in pursuit of CWB pledges is not clouded by business-as-usual activities and the added value of a CWB approach is fully recognised.
- It was noted that although there is appetite to increase the use of local enterprises within contracts and frameworks, procurement teams are not always aware of suitable local enterprises. There is a need to increase visibility of local businesses and bring to the attention of procurement teams.
- There is a need to ensure Ayrshire is getting a fair share from national contracts.
- It is important to recognise the role of CWB in the bigger picture of planning for the future and developing a wellbeing economy. This will include recognising the value of young people and ensuring links between Community Mental Health and Wellbeing funds with CWB.
- Collaboration between Police Scotland and SFRS on young people and recruitment and mentoring schemes (MCR Pathways) were noted as positive examples.

It was agreed the Charter progress templates would be analysed further to extract key areas for collaboration and engagement and discussed at future LOWG meetings. It was noted Anchor Charter progress would be shared at the next meeting (12th November) of the CWB Expert Advisory Panel to gather their reflections and recommendations on progress against the pledges. Panel feedback will be shared with the LOWG.

Progress on the Charter pledges will also be presented to the CWB Commission at its next meeting.

ACTION – Caitriona McAuley will explore the potential for advice and input from the North Ayrshire Organisational Development team to support the socialising of CWB culture within Anchor Institutions.

6. Next Steps and future agenda items

Attendees were asked to consider contributions to future meetings, including potential guest speakers of areas of interest to explore further. Future items / areas to explore include:

- Learning from Organisational Development teams on socialising CWB across institutions.
- Further explore opportunities for green businesses, jobs and development of a green economy.
- Look closely at opportunities for collaboration between Anchors.
- A discussion on the Regional Skills Investment Plan when available.

The next meeting of the LOWG will take place on Wednesday 16th February 2022, 2pm – 4pm.

7. AOB

The following points were noted:

- Caitriona McAuley noted that the first meeting of the Regional Economic Development Strategy took place in early November. The LOWG will be updated on future activity.
- An update report on the Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Fund was attached for the information of LOWG members.
- It was noted that in collaboration with NHS Ayrshire & Arran, a bid for funding to support their Anchor activity was submitted to the Health Foundation. The LOWG will be updated on the outcome of the bid.