

Appendix 1

Executive Summary

Our Vision - ‘To make South Lanarkshire a flourishing, green, dynamic and equitable place for all.’

South Lanarkshire is an outstanding place to live, work and visit. Our skilled and talented population continues to grow, and our central location and excellent transport links between South Lanarkshire and regional, national, and international markets reinforces our unique selling point (USP) as an unrivalled business location. Our economic ambition is underpinned by a supportive regulatory framework,

Context

The UK, Scottish, Glasgow City Region and South Lanarkshire economies are all facing real challenges from the global pandemic; our country’s new international trading position, and the climate emergency and journey to net zero, all of which impact our lives now and in the foreseeable future.

South Lanarkshire Council is refreshing and launching a suite of new key strategies and plans all of which are inherently linked and have been informed, through consultation, by what our communities have told us should be our priorities:

- **People** – we need to put people first and reduce inequality
- **Progress** – we need to recover, progress and improve
- **Planet** – we need to work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places

The need for *inclusive growth* - an economy in which everyone can participate and benefit from – is more acute than ever, so *maximising opportunities across all our communities* must underpin our approach.

The global *Climate Emergency* remains a very real threat. Climate change commands us to think and act more sustainably and move purposefully towards ‘*net zero*’.

Consequently, we will deliver our economic strategy in the context of national strategy and policy.

Our Key Themes – People, Place and Business

The Strategy focusses on the three key themes of sustainable economic development: - *People, Place and Business*.

People

South Lanarkshire’s greatest asset is our people. Our success in supporting Fair Work opportunities and Skills for now and the future, are fundamental to boost our local economy, promoting innovation, supporting inclusive and sustainable growth and addressing poverty and inequality within our communities. Our Ambitions for the Future are:

- **Employment** - *A well-established, accessible employability pathway enabling all South Lanarkshire residents to fully participate in the labour market.*
- **Workforce Skills Development**- *South Lanarkshire’s workforce have the qualifications, skills and attributes required by employers to be more productive and prosperous.*
- **Health and Wellbeing** – *We reduce health inequalities and improve mental health within our communities.*

We will:

- **Minimise unemployment with a focus on disadvantaged communities through employment support.**
- **Promote opportunities and careers to young people and those facing redundancy.**
- **Influence activity and skills investment to address skills gaps.**
- **Maximise engagement with partners to develop a programme of skills alignment to drive sustainable and inclusive growth**
- **Address educational and digital inequalities in our deprived communities.**
- **Increase digital access, training and creativity in our communities.**
- **Promote and support in-work training with local businesses and social enterprises.**
- **Assist our businesses and social enterprises to recruit locally as we develop our Community Wealth Building agenda.**
- **Promote opportunities for people who have suffered mental health problems to train for or return to employment**

Place

South Lanarkshire is a great place to start, grow and locate a business. A place where all our people can access opportunity and achieve success. A place which is the best-connected area in Scotland, supported through improved digital, sustainable and green infrastructure. A place leading the nation in low carbon, renewable technology, and climate resilience on our journey to net zero.

Our ambitions for the Future are:

- *Support new and established business locations*
- *Successful development of our town centres and the role they play in our society*
- *Maintain and increase capital spending programmes through attracting external funding*
- *Grow the visitor, leisure and tourism economy in our area*

We will:

- **Utilise property assets to maximise sustainable development opportunities and the promotion of vacant & derelict land sites.**
- **Establish a web based/ social media presence promoting South Lanarkshire.**
- **Adopt more flexible regulatory approaches to maximise the sustainability and potential of our town centres.**
- **Work with local business, social enterprises and community-based organisations to provide a better offer for town and village centre users.**
- **Make our centres truly accessible for all whilst making a major contribution towards net zero.**
- **Secure additional financial resources through our Funding team.**
- **Deliver an updated Tourism Strategy to grow South Lanarkshire based tourism businesses**

Business

South Lanarkshire's many and diverse businesses are resilient and continue to thrive. We have strengths in key sectors including Food and Drink, Tourism, Construction, Social Care and Manufacturing. We have an emerging strength in Logistics, Warehousing and Distribution.

Our ambitions for the Future:

- *Digitally empower businesses and social enterprises*
- *Increase and sustain new business survival rates as we transition to a net zero economy*
- *Develop resilient, local supply chains*
- *Link business success, fair work and improved productivity*

We will:

- **Work with businesses and social enterprises to become digitally confident and digitally competent.**
- **Increase digital participation and competence in our existing and emerging workforce.**
- **Maximise engagement with Business Gateway and local business sectors (including social enterprises).**
- **Create and build collaborative partnerships on our journey to net zero.**
- **Improve our Enterprise Rate, Business Birth and Survival rates.**
- **Establish a resilient, locally based procurement framework.**
- **Increase contract spend with local SME's to deliver on our Community Wealth Building ambitions.**
- **Work with businesses and social enterprises to improve productivity and innovation.**
- **Work with businesses and social enterprises to implement fair work practices.**
- **Increase the number of organisations accredited as Living Wage Employers.**

Delivering on our Ambitions

We have developed a dynamic Action Plan which accompanies the Strategy, centred around our People, Place and Business themes, to track progress.

We will apply an evidence-based approach, utilising data, to create an informed baseline which will help us track and monitor progress and identify any changes we need to make as we progress our economic development programme.

Our forecasts suggest that there will be growth and opportunities created in the labour market around.

- **Sectors:** The Human Health and Social Care sector is forecast to have the greatest growth. Working with employers to improve job quality and pay in the sector will be key to ensure the sector remains attractive to the workforce.

- **Occupations:** There will be changes in the types of roles as new technologies are introduced. This will support growth in IT and technological-based roles. Our workforce requires to have access to digital infrastructure, education and training opportunities.
- **Skills Demand:** The greatest requirement will be for people with higher education level qualifications.

Our Action Plan will respond to these opportunities and be flexible enough to respond to changes that take place in our economy, our labour market and our business base.

Monitoring and Reporting Progress

This Strategy is a high-level statement of intent, demonstrating how South Lanarkshire Council will lead in building and growing the local economy. The Action Plan which accompanies the Strategy will be subject to regular review to ensure we are maximising benefits realisation for as many of our residents as possible.