

# Report

Report to:	<b>Executive Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>21 June 2023</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>South Lanarkshire Social Enterprise Strategy 2023 to 2027</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to: -

- ♦ provide an overview of the South Lanarkshire Social Enterprise Strategy 2023 to 2027, (attached as Appendix 1 to this report)
- ♦ seek approval of the Social Enterprise Strategy
- ♦ confirm the Council's continued commitment to investing in the growth and sustainability of the social enterprise sector in South Lanarkshire

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation: -

- (1) The South Lanarkshire Social Enterprise Strategy 2023 to 2027 be approved.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. The Council is refreshing and launching a range of new key strategies and plans including the Council Plan 'Connect', the Community Plan, the Community Wealth Building Strategy, the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy, the Tourism Strategy, and the Economic Strategy 2022 to 2027. All these documents are inherently linked and recognise social enterprise as a key sector under the priorities of People, Progress and Planet.
- 3.2. At the first meeting of the Community Wealth Building Commission on 31 August 2021, members approved an action plan to accompany the South Lanarkshire Community Wealth Building Strategy 2022. This new Social Enterprise Strategy is one of the outcomes of the Community Wealth Building Action Plan, alongside the development of a Social Enterprise Steering Group.
- 3.3. The Social Enterprise Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to increase the number of social enterprises and improve the sustainability of the sector in South Lanarkshire.
- 3.4. Officers have consulted with the third sector on the preparation of the Strategy and its priorities, and a draft has been shared with partners and stakeholders as part of the consultation process. A list of consultees is attached at Appendix 2.

- 3.5. A newly established South Lanarkshire Social Economy Steering Group is the leadership group for developing and implementing this Strategy and associated Action Plan. Its core role is to inform and influence the key priorities and set out the actions to be delivered through a partnership approach. Members of the Group include Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASLan), South Lanarkshire Third Sector Chief Officers Group (COG), Third Sector rural representation, Inspirent, Business Gateway Lanarkshire, Social Enterprise Scotland, SLC Procurement and SLC Community and Enterprise Resources.

#### **4. Social Enterprise Strategy 2023-2027**

- 4.1. The proposed Social Enterprise Strategy is attached as Appendix 1. This is a new Strategy for South Lanarkshire, which is in keeping with the Scottish Government's priorities for the sector and vision of a fair society and inclusive economy as set out in the '*Scotland's Social Enterprise Strategy 2016-2026*'. The three high level priorities are:-
1. Stimulating Social Enterprise
  2. Developing Stronger Organisations
  3. Realising Market Opportunity
- 4.2. Contained within the Strategy, 'Our Vision' is:  
***To cultivate a vibrant and growing social enterprise sector in South Lanarkshire, which creates social and environmental benefits for all.***
- 4.3. The Strategy provides an ongoing framework for dialogue about, and influence upon, capacity building and business support practices as they affect, and are informed by, enterprising third sector organisations and specifically social enterprises. It takes an evidence-based approach to inform detailed actions and activity going forward, using data from the 2021 National Social Enterprise Census.
- 4.4. The Council has aligned significant resources to the delivery of this Strategy which will support the sector and ensure that South Lanarkshire social enterprises are receiving targeted assistance to start up and grow. This will complement the Council's own business support programme, the existing ecosystem of support and contribute to the delivery of a well-being and greener economy.
- 4.5. Whilst most of the social enterprises are based in urban areas, around 26% are within rural locations. According to the National Social Enterprise Census 2021, social enterprises in South Lanarkshire were active in several sectors mostly, early learning and childcare (16%), health and social care (16%) and arts and creative industries (15%). Most reported a blended model of funding, however, many stated they aspire to become self-sustaining and, to this end, business support is critical.
- 4.6. In summary, the Strategy includes the following sections:-
- ◆ *Foreword* – Sets out the Council's commitment and investment into growing and sustaining a vibrant social enterprise sector and the contribution to the local economy that the sector delivers, adding value to the existing ecosystem of local and national support and recognising the importance of collaboration and partnership working to effectively deliver on this Strategy
  - ◆ *Introduction* – Highlights and promotes partners' ambitions to deliver on actions under the key priorities of stimulating social enterprise, developing stronger organisations, and realising market opportunity

- ◆ *The Strategy in Context* – The Strategy is shaped by both the Strategic Policy Framework and current priorities. In developing the Strategy, officers have taken the opportunity to ensure that objectives remain aligned with policy and strategy updates moving forward to take cognisance of the existing ecosystem of support
- ◆ Officers have developed this Strategy as part of the Council’s suite of strategies and plans, namely the Council Plan ‘Connect’, the Community Plan, the Community Wealth Building Strategy, the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy and the Tourism Strategy, all of which are inherently linked and informed by our communities
- ◆ The Strategy seeks to promote inclusive growth, community owned assets and shorter supply chains, supporting net zero ambitions, seeking to maximise opportunities across communities
- ◆ *Our Priorities* – Objectives are set under the key priorities of **stimulating social enterprise, developing stronger organisations, and realising market opportunity** to shape ambitions for the future. A series of ‘We Will’ statements to confirm commitment to strengthen and target existing business offering, invest in the sector, expand the capability of local social enterprises, and strengthen social capital
- ◆ *Delivering on our Ambitions:* The key actions and areas of activity are set out in the Strategy which defines our priorities, commitment, outcomes, and how we will measure success

4.7. Existing monitoring and reporting arrangements will be applied to avoid duplication and ensure consistency, with ‘measurement of success results being reported to committee annually. The Social Economy Steering Group, referred to in paragraph 3.5, will oversee the effective implementation of the Strategy and take collective ownership for setting out activity and delivering on the associated Action Plan.

## 5. Local Initiatives

5.1. A pilot Social Enterprise Accelerator programme offering targeted business support to 15 South Lanarkshire social enterprises which ran from November 2022 through to February 2023. Procurement is underway to deliver a further two programmes.

5.2. Delivered in person and on-line, the pilot programme included learning from weekly workshops and 1:1s with experts, focusing on topics enterprises can use immediately to grow. Topics included social investment, generating income, marketing, and business strategy.

5.3. Benefits for participants of this Accelerator programme are:-

- ◆ stimulus to change and innovate
- ◆ networking and peer support with fellow leaders from other social enterprises
- ◆ access to ‘expert help’ and action planning support

5.4. A bespoke procurement workshop, delivered by the Supplier Development Programme (SDP) in April, was attended by 11 local social enterprises, with input from SLC Procurement, and enabled attendees to access expert information and support to become more ‘tender-ready’.

## 6. Next Steps and Timescales

6.1. Subject to Committee approval, officers will finalise the graphical content of the Strategy and circulate in hard copy and communicate via the Council’s website. The graphic design is in keeping with the Community Wealth Building Strategy.

6.2. The Strategy has been designed to set out the framework under which the Social Enterprise Steering Group will define specific actions. During the action planning phase, regular updates on implementation and measuring the success of the Strategy and Action Plan will be provided to Committee.

6.3. The Strategy will be launched in Autumn 2023, as part of a wider local event for the enterprising third sector and key stakeholders.

## **7. Employee Implications**

7.1. An Economic Development Officer (Social Economy) has been recruited to finalise and assist with the delivery of the Strategy's Action Plan and measure its success going forward. Existing resources within Enterprise and Sustainable Development will be utilised to finalise the Strategy, deliver the action plan and work with the Social Enterprise Steering Group and the sector to measure its success going forward.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1. The funds required to finalise the Strategy and Action Plan are included in the Council's revenue budgets for the lifespan of the Strategy. External funds will also be sought from UK Government and Scottish Government funding streams to maximising the impacts of Social Enterprise Strategy.

## **9. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

9.1. The Action Plan will be delivered having regard to best practice both in terms of how those actions are delivered and the commitment to net zero.

## **10. Other Implications**

10.1. The key risk associated with the finalisation, delivery and monitoring of the Strategy is the potential for further national and/or international economic shocks. This could constrain recovery and economic growth both locally and nationally.

## **11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

11.1. Both a Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Equality Impact Assessment have been undertaken.

11.2. Council Resources and external partners have been consulted as part of the consultation process. Further consultation will take place on the roll out and implementation of the Action Plan.

**David Booth**  
**Executive Director**

26 May 2023

## **Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes**

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Working with and respecting others
- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent
- ◆ Ambitious, self-aware and improving
- ◆ Fair, open and sustainable
- ◆ Excellent employer
- ◆ We will work to put people first and reduce inequality
- ◆ We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places
- ◆ We will work to recover, progress and improve

- ◆ Our children and young people thrive
- ◆ Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live
- ◆ Thriving business, fair jobs and vibrant town centres
- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- ◆ People live the healthiest lives possible
- ◆ Inspiring learners, transforming learning, strengthening partnerships

### **Previous References**

- ◆ None

### **List of Background Papers**

- ◆ South Lanarkshire Economic Strategy 2022-2027
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Community Wealth Building Strategy 2022

### **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please  
Contact: -

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