

Report

Report to:	Community Wealth Building Commission
Date of Meeting:	6 December 2022
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	First Scottish Community Wealth Building Conference - 7 October 2022
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ update the Commission on the first Community Wealth Building Conference held on 7 October 2022 and the potential learning for South Lanarkshire.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Commission is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the contents of the conference detailed within the report be noted; and
- (2) that the Commission consider how the potential learning contained within section 5 could be implemented in South Lanarkshire.

3. Background

3.1. On 7 October 2022, North Ayrshire Council hosted the first Community Wealth Building Conference in Scotland at Saltcoats Town Hall. Each local authority was invited to send two candidates along to participate, and the Community Engagement Manager and Economic Development Manager attended. This report contains feedback on the event and some potential development areas of learning.

4. The Conference

4.1. The full day conference was comprised of four sessions, with a welcome and conclusion. The programme for the day, detailing all presenters and the organisations which they represent, is attached as Appendix 1.

4.2. The welcome session, chaired by the Chief Executive of North Ayrshire Council, Craig Hatton. This session set the scene for what was to come by explaining the history of CWB in North Ayrshire. Tom Arthur, the Minister for Public Health, Finance and Community Wealth Building discussed the Scottish Government aspirations for CWB, including the introduction of a national policy and interest in any feedback to the consultation around this regarding what the Government could do to support local implementation.

4.3. The first session, chaired by Russell McCutcheon the Executive Director (Place) of North Ayrshire Council, focused on some success stories from work which has already taken place and how these supported the five CWB pillars. A film presentation showcased the impact of CWB work in Ayrshire on the life of a young person who lived there. This can be viewed at [Community Wealth Building - A Day in the life of a young person in North Ayrshire – YouTube](#). A second film presented the work of the Ayrshire Growth Deal around CWB [Ayrshire's Community Wealth Building Programme | A bold](#)

[approach to Economic Development - YouTube](#) . North Ayrshire Council staff spoke about examples such as work to link procurement activity with development support for local businesses, with an increase in the percentage of local spend and local contracts as a result. The development of two solar PV farms was discussed, being built on sterile ground which had previously been landfill. This is estimated to be capable of providing two thirds of the energy needed by the Council estate, with the surplus being sold to the grid and a percentage of the income generated by this invested back into community benefits once the farms are live.

The vice principal of Ayrshire College, Michael Breen, discussed local work around fair employment, including the lead of NHS Ayrshire and Arran around inclusive recruitment techniques and the support of the local Third Sector Interface, VASA, in developing volunteering opportunities. Finally, Stewart McGregor from Scottish Enterprise spoke about the importance of the plural economy and new models of business ownership to developing CWB initiatives.

- 4.4. The second session, chaired by Professor Sarah Deas from the Wellbeing Economy Alliance, discussed ways in which CWB can be used to influence policy and overcome local economic issues. Speakers included council staff, Sarah McGinley from Democracy Collaborative and Stuart McDonald from CLES. This session explored the transformative capacity of CWB when it is regarded as a fundamental change of approach to economic development and not a way of mitigating difficulties in existing systems. In particular, attention should be given to impact on the four groups most commonly excluded from economic development benefits – young people, females, those with longterm health conditions and those experiencing inwork poverty. Advice given included that we regard CWB as a movement and learn from each other, being open and honest about successes and improvement areas; that we are really clear about our purpose in implementing CWB; and not to be afraid to act now in a constructive way rather than react to crises.
- 4.5. Session three was chaired by Emma McMullen, the North Ayrshire Council Senior Manager for Economic Policy. This session highlighted how CWB can be used in rural and island communities. Callum Ian Maciver of Western Isles spoke about the unique situation there where 77% of land is in community ownership, and the challenges and opportunities are very different from much of the rest of Scotland, with difficulties around housing and shrinking public services, and opportunities being taken to promote community ownership through asset transfer, peatland restoration and embedding services within the local community rather than centrally. Artemis Pana of Scottish Rural Action discussed specific ways that rural communities are embracing CWB, for example within Highland Council where the curriculum in schools has been pivoted to meet CWB aims. Plural ownership of the care sector was also presented as way to help small providers be competitive in markets without putting pressure on them to grow businesses beyond sustainability. This requires connections, collective resilience and networks, not just business planning. The North Ayrshire Local Island Plans were discussed including how these link to the work of the local Community Planning Partnership and locality planning.
- 4.6. The final learning session was chaired by Dr Audrey Sutton, North Ayrshire Council's Executive Director of Communities and Education and brought the conversation back to how communities can be involved in CWB and what is needed to make sure this happens effectively. Dr Sutton discussed how we intentionally involve the community in CWB as a principle, and the overlap between this and the existing framework of community development approaches in use. Communities were presented as anchor organisations in their own rights, and the importance of building human, economic, social and natural capital as a key to individual wellbeing. Community economic

development and the importance of linking community groups with wider social and environmental resources which can help them achieve their aims was highlighted. Examples were presented by community members, including the Training Station in Stevenston, where a karate club were introduced to “friends with talents” such as Scotrail, sportscotland and other council officers who supported them to take ownership of disused space at the railway station and develop a well used community hub. A local Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament spoke about their links to the work, including input around climate change work and the importance of being able to access some unrestricted funding to allow groups to overcome hurdles in their projects. Approximately £3million has been distributed to date through locality partnerships, which has levered in additional investment of around £6.7 million; this has created 48 local jobs, 786 volunteering opportunities, and over 40 sustainable asset transfers to communities. The importance of communities as leaders, and as thought leaders as well as within projects, was highlighted. Finally, Elaine Young from NHS Ayrshire and Arran spoke about the national NHS Benefits Gateway Portal, the local resource being used to help third and community sector groups and suppliers link with each other, and the NHS input to the CWB board and executive leadership in Ayrshire.

- 4.7. Neil McInroy, Scottish Government Advisor on CWB, then closed the event with some reflections and inspiring comments to the attendees.

5. Potential Learning Considerations

- 5.1. The Commission is asked to consider the following key points, which contain suggestions and potential learning for South Lanarkshire:

- ◆ Key to the successful implementation of CWB approaches in Ayrshire so far has been shared leadership around the pillars, for example the work which NHS Ayrshire and Arran has led on around inclusive recruitment. This may be an approach which can be developed between the anchor organisations in South Lanarkshire.
- ◆ Embedding CWB as an approach across all staff groups within the anchor organisations may require awareness raising and learning opportunities; this can help to embed new approaches in staff practice.
- ◆ As the CWB work in South Lanarkshire matures, it should be built into the start of project planning processes and not considered as a bolt on at the end.
- ◆ It is important to consider how communities are involved in the delivery of CWB, the contribution they can make to the agenda, and the difference which this work is intended to make to the lives of people living in South Lanarkshire.
- ◆ Just transition and climate challenge work can be a key feature of CWB and there is an opportunity to create stronger linkages between these two agendas.

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. There are no direct employee implications.

7.1 Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications.

8 Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 8.1. There are no climate change implications as a result of this report.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1. None.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required.

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

14 October 2022

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- Accountable, efficient, effective and transparent

Previous References

- None

List of Background Papers

- None

Contact for Further Information

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

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