

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING COMMISSION

Minutes of meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 31 August 2021

Chair:

Councillor John Ross

Present:

South Lanarkshire Council

Councillors Alex Allison, Robert Brown, Maureen Chalmers, Joe Fagan
C Sneddon, Chief Executive; P Manning, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources); S Sengupta, Director, Health and Social Care

Federation of Small Businesses

A Aird, Group Chair

NHS Lanarkshire

E Russell, Head of Health Improvement

VASLan

S Sweeney, Chief Executive Officer

Also Attending:

South Lanarkshire Council

J Forbes, Property Manager (Assets and Estates Services); R Leith, Community, Participation and Development Manager; T Little, Head of Communications and Strategy; G McCann, Head of Administration and Legal Services; N Reid, Improvement and Community Planning Manager; S Somerville, Administration Manager

Apologies

NHS Lanarkshire

H Knox, Chief Executive

University of the West of Scotland

E O'Reilly, Head of Campus Services

Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to this first meeting of the Commission which, he considered, would herald a new way of partnership working to benefit the communities within South Lanarkshire.

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Terms of Reference

A report dated 3 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the Commission's Terms of Reference.

The draft Community Wealth Building Strategy had been approved at the Council's Executive Committee on 10 March 2021 and it set out the Terms of Reference and membership of the Community Wealth Building Commission, with membership further defined at the Executive Committee meeting held on 26 May 2021.

The Terms of Reference was attached as an appendix to the report.

The Commission decided: that the Commission's Terms of Reference, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 10 March 2001 (Paragraph 7) and 26 May 2021 (Paragraph 5)]

3 Context for Community Wealth Building: Data Digest

A report dated 10 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted presenting data on the social and economic situation in South Lanarkshire as a context for Community Wealth Building.

A joint session of the North and South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnerships had been held in June 2021 on the topic of tackling inequalities. The Partnership Boards had considered a digest of demographic, social and economic indicators relating to North and South Lanarkshire.

This information had been updated, where possible, and was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The data digest covered a range of topics, including:-

- ◆ general population
- ◆ claimant unemployment and universal credit claimants
- ◆ child poverty
- ◆ welfare service statistics
- ◆ economic performance, including GVA, business start-ups and failures, and businesses per population
- ◆ health
- ◆ impact of Covid on the labour market
- ◆ a range of public health indicators, including road accident casualties, crime statistics and hospital admissions data

C Sneddon advised that the Council had been monitoring the unemployment rate since February/March last year and it had almost doubled. He referred to recently received economic projections which indicated that comparative recovery was projected to be slower in Scotland than the rest of the UK. He highlighted the recruitment challenges in some sectors and referred to the need to nurture growth potential.

E Russell intimated that some of the statistics within the digest were helpful and advised that NHS Lanarkshire was taking forward a population needs assessment which would include more detailed information in terms of localities. She offered to bring a paper to a future meeting of the Commission.

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

4 Community Wealth Building Strategy

A report dated 10 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the Council's Community Wealth Building (CWB) Strategy.

The Strategy was developed through a process which included:-

- ◆ an evaluation of the Council's current practice in terms of how it aligned with the principles of CWB
- ◆ a desktop review of approaches that had been adopted in other council areas
- ◆ liaison with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies to benefit from best practice and experience gained elsewhere
- ◆ subject experts within the Council looking at specific CWB objectives in the South Lanarkshire context

The CWB Strategy, which set out high-level aspirations, was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. A detailed action plan had been developed to support the delivery of those aspirations over an appropriate time period.

Decisions would have to be made about priorities, timescales and the sequence in which commitments were delivered. Elected member and stakeholder input to this aspect of the Strategy would be an important requirement as this agenda was progressed in South Lanarkshire.

The CWB Strategy committed to the publication of annual reports on progress as well as the development of a dashboard of suitable indicators to track the direction and pace of change. This reporting framework would be integrated with the Council's other performance reporting arrangements, including the annual Resource Plans and reporting on the Council plan, Connect.

A robust risk assessment and register would be developed to accompany the detailed action plan.

During discussions, it was acknowledged that partnership working was important to establish what could be done better at a local level to build the local economy.

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

Councillor Allison joined the meeting during consideration of this item of business

5 Community Wealth Building Draft Action Plan and Work Programme

A report dated 29 June 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted providing an initial workplan for the Commission based around action plans which covered the 5 pillars of Community Wealth Building (CWB).

The Council approved its CWB Strategy on 10 March 2021. Recognising that the Strategy set out principles and high-level aspirations in relation to CWB, work had been underway to develop the detailed action plans which would support delivery of the Strategy. The draft actions within the plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, were currently Council-focused, however, it was anticipated that plans would be live documents which would evolve as necessary to include partner and stakeholder elements as appropriate and as directed by the Commission. The actions addressed the CWB objectives under each pillar. The timescales within the action plan showed the anticipated completion date of the specific steps required to deliver the action. Where it had been possible to quantify the scale of activity of improvement to be expected, the action plan set targets against measures. However, a number of measures would require further work to establish the baseline and to estimate potential gains arising from the implementation of the actions.

Going forward, it was proposed that the following items, as detailed at paragraph 5.2, be considered as elements of the work programme:-

- ◆ partner and community representation on the Commission
- ◆ risk register
- ◆ CWB awareness and communications

P Manning and C Sneddon responded to members' questions in relation to anchor institutions and procurement, highlighting that the Council would benefit from participation by other partners/stakeholders.

A Aird emphasised the importance of getting local businesses engaged with procurement and undertook to feed back to the business community, so it was aware of the Commission's objectives and the Council's CWB Strategy.

There followed a full discussion on identifying target sector areas, such as the green agenda/economy and growth.

The Commission decided:

- (1) that the report be noted;
- (2) that the draft action plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and
- (3) that the items outlined in paragraph 5.2 be approved as the basis for the initial work programme of the Commission.

6 Community Asset Transfer

A report dated 11 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the community asset transfer process and the use of the additional fund established within the Council's 2021/2022 General Revenue budget.

The 2021/2022 General Revenue budget included £250,000 for the purpose of supporting the delivery of sustainable community asset transfer proposals. This funding was anticipated to be spent across 3 financial years, as outlined in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

In order to more effectively support community asset transfer, a temporary post would be created within the Community Engagement and Participation Team. The postholder would develop/refresh service standards and guidance, assist organisations develop their capacity and access support to create business cases, as well as act as a liaison between the community and Council.

Details were provided on how the following further key areas of support would be delivered to increase the likelihood and number of successful community asset transfers in future:-

- ◆ development of community organisation capacity
- ◆ property investment

In response to a question from Councillor Fagan on why a grants system was necessary for the Council to administer, the Property Manager (Assets and Estates Services) advised that there was a gap due to some groups not being eligible for certain grant funding and it was anticipated that this could help address that.

S Sweeney advised that there was a range of organisations interested in community asset transfer and VASLan would help to support the process.

The Commission decided:

- (1) that the creation of a support officer post within the Community Engagement and Participation Team be noted; and
- (2) that the criteria for both community asset transfer support grant and property investment, as outlined in section 7 of the report, be noted.

7 Suggested Items for Future Meetings

A report dated 10 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on suggested items for future meetings of the Commission.

Delivering the action plan for the 5 pillars of Community Wealth Building (CWB) would be a key focus for the work of the Commission.

Further suggested items for future meetings included:-

- ♦ monitoring protocol
- ♦ engagement with other CWB projects
- ♦ CWB risk register
- ♦ strategy development
- ♦ CWB awareness and communication

Following discussion, particularly around the 'green agenda' and community wealth/wellbeing, some additional suggestions included:-

- ♦ holding development sessions to consider issues at both a national and local level
- ♦ considering case studies and the lived experiences of others

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

8 Proposal to Live Stream Future Meetings

A report dated 18 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on a proposal to live stream future meeting of the Commission.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the public were not, at present, permitted to enter public buildings.

In the interests of openness and transparency, it was proposed that, as the Commission's meetings would, in normal circumstances, be held in public, future meetings of the Commission be live streamed. It was also intended that the recordings of the meetings would remain on the Council's YouTube channel to be accessible for public viewing.

The Commission decided: that future meetings of the Commission be live streamed to the South Lanarkshire Council YouTube channel.

9 Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Commission be held on Wednesday 27 October 2021 at 9.00am.

10 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.