

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING COMMISSION

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 5 September 2023

Chair:

Councillor Margaret B Walker

Present:

South Lanarkshire Council

Councillors Robert Brown, Margaret Cooper, Kirsten Robb, John Ross

NHS Lanarkshire

J Pravinkumar, Director of Public Health

University of the West of Scotland

T Adamson, Estates Environmental Manager

VASLan

S Sweeney, Chief Executive Officer

Also Attending:

South Lanarkshire Council

Community and Enterprise Resources

F Carlin, Head of Planning and Regulatory Services; I Ross, Project Manager

Finance and Corporate Resources

H Calley, Administration Officer; C Fergusson, Head of Finance (Transactions); T Little, Head of Communications and Strategy; G McCann, Head of Administration and Legal Services; K McLeod, Administration Assistant; N Reid, Improvement and Community Planning Manager

Apologies:

South Lanarkshire Council

Councillors Alex Allison and Joe Fagan (Chair)

C Sneddon, Chief Executive; P Manning, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources); S Sengupta, Director, Health and Social Care

Federation of Small Businesses

H Kuboyama, Development Manager, West of Scotland

NHS Lanarkshire

J Gardner, Chief Executive

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Wealth Building Commission held on 6 June 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Commission decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Community Wealth Building Action Plan 2023 Refresh

A report dated 17 August 2023 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the draft Community Wealth Building (CWB) Action Plan 2023/2024.

At its inaugural meeting on 31 August 2021, the Commission approved an action plan to accompany the CWB Strategy. Following presentation of the latest Q4 report, the action plan was reviewed to remove completed actions and to refresh the remaining actions for year 3 of the Strategy.

The refreshed Action Plan would continue to be monitored and reported through the Improve system, with updates provided to the Commission at Q2 and Q4.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 31 August 2021 (Paragraph 5)]

4 Community Wealth Building Annual Report 2022/2023

A report dated 17 August 2023 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted presenting a draft of the Community Wealth Building (CWB) annual report for 2022/2023.

The Council approved a CWB Strategy on 10 March 2021, resulting in the formation of the CWB Commission to engage a wide range of partners and stakeholders in the CWB agenda. To support formal reporting of progress against the Strategy, the Commission agreed, on 7 February 2022, that annual reports would be produced to highlight progress and showcase examples of significant work under the 5 pillars.

The annual reports also provided a vehicle for communicating the purpose of CWB and why the Council and partners considered that CWB was an important way of working in South Lanarkshire. The first annual report, covering year 1 of the Strategy, was presented in final form to the Commission in September 2022.

The draft Annual Report, covering April 2022 to March 2023, was presented as Appendix 1 to the report.

In August 2021, the Commission agreed to monitor the CWB action plan through progress reports at Q2 and Q4, however, the Commission also agreed there was scope to reach a wider audience and to enhance communications around the CWB agenda by presenting progress in a more accessible format. An annual report offered the opportunity to present what had been achieved and to restate the aspirations of the Council and partners to champion CWB across all aspects of service planning and delivery.

The annual report did not replace the formal reporting of Q2 and Q4 progress but allowed a more public-facing and accessible presentation of information, using key points and case studies to illustrate CWB in action. The structure and content of the annual report were summarised in the report.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 7 February 2022 (Paragraph 6)]

5 Spatial Planning and Community Wealth Building

A report dated 28 July 2023 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) Resources) was submitted:-

- ◆ providing an update on the direction of the spatial planning policy on Community Wealth Building (CWB), as set out in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)
- ◆ summarising the process involved in the preparation of the Council's next Local Development Plan (LDP) and the key issues the plan would address in terms of Community Wealth Building

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 set out the legislative response to the transformation of the planning system the Scottish Government was developing. It included the introduction of a statutory requirement for the Scottish Government to prepare and adopt a new NPF which, unlike previous versions, would form part of the development plan alongside the Council's LDP. It meant all planning decisions, including the preparation of LDPs and the determination of planning applications, had to accord with NPF4.

The Act also set out the legislative requirements for a new style of LDP and the report focused on the issues in relation to CWB.

NPF4 was the Scottish Government's National Spatial Strategy for Scotland to 2045, the aims and details of which were detailed in the report. In relation to CWB, NPF4 encouraged, promoted and facilitated a new strategic approach to economic development that provided a practical model for building a wellbeing economy at local, regional and national levels.

LDPs would be aligned with the strategy for CWB for their area and would address CWB priorities, identify community assets, set out opportunities to tackle economic disadvantage and inequality and seek to provide benefits for local communities. Further details of LDPs were included in the report.

At its meeting on 8 August 2023, the Planning Committee gave its approval for officers to start preparation of a third LDP for South Lanarkshire (LDP3). LDP3 would take account of NPF4 and the Council's Community Plan. The report gave further information on LDP3 which would include a delivery programme and be place-based and people-centred.

An evidence report would be prepared at the start of the plan-making process and used to inform plans, before the proposed Plan looked at where new development would take place.

The Council was also required to invite community bodies to prepare a Local Place Plan for their area at the start of the evidence report process, to allow local communities to set out their aspirations for local improvement in order to feed into the development plan process.

The newly published guidance provided advice on the information to be gathered and considered. For CWB, this included the location, use and condition of community assets, the CWB priorities that had been identified for the area and the identification of areas of economic disadvantage and inequality. Both the CWB and Social Enterprise Strategies were relevant to that context. Using the data gathered, the evidence report would show how a wellbeing focused local economy would be developed.

The report provided the next steps being taken in relation to the LDP3 evidence report, the direction of LDP3 and preparing the delivery programme.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

6 Town Centres Strategic Update

A report dated 27 July 2023 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted providing an update on town centre activity.

The nature of town centres across the UK was in a transitional stage. The issues town centres were facing included the economic downturn, internet shopping, the growth of out of town shopping malls, changes in retailers' business models and consumer expectations that had resulted in a decline in footfall. Some of the issues were local and specific to individual towns, however, many were seen across the country influenced by wider economic patterns, consumer behaviour and corporate decisions.

Supporting town centres remained a Council priority and officers continued to work, in partnership with groups and organisations in each town, to achieve common goals.

The contribution town centres made to communities could not be overstated and with around 70% of businesses and jobs in the economy located in town centres, they were often the principal location for leisure and hospitality.

Across the 10 towns defined in the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan (LDP), there was active and ongoing engagement with the most appropriate groups in each town. Town Centre strategies and action plans had been prepared and approved for Hamilton, Cambuslang, Larkhall and Blantyre, with work underway in Rutherglen.

Similar plans were being progressed by the communities in Lanark and Carluke along with the master planning work by the owners of East Kilbride. In Strathaven, the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) had been completed and funding for a significant project in Biggar had been approved. A review and refresh of the Hamilton strategy was ongoing.

Those strategies and action plans were closely aligned with the Scottish Government's approach to town centres captured in the New Future for Scotland's Town Centres report and action plan.

Officers in Economic Development were working with all key stakeholders across towns and had commissioned 2 key pieces of work to set the direction of the Council's work around town centres going forward. Town Centre Visioning and Transition to Net Zero would inform and align with existing and emerging funding opportunities around town centres.

Officers in Enterprise, Planning and Community Engagement were working with colleagues from the Improvement Service on a pilot project in Rutherglen called Shaping Places for Wellbeing. The project was working in 7 towns across Scotland, taking a multi-agency approach to placemaking. The initiative was still in its early stages, however, it was hoped it would become a useful model for working with communities across South Lanarkshire.

There were a number of key areas of work underway in support of town centres which would inform the investment strategies and priorities going forward for the next 5 to 10 years. This work would also support and inform potential Levelling Up Funding and other external funding bids.

Details of the East Kilbride Town Centre Masterplan, Hamilton Town Centre Masterplan, Place Based Investment Programme, including the agreed allocation and Town Centre Living were included in the report.

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

7 Community Wealth Building Charter

A draft report dated 28 July 2023 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted providing an update on town centre activity.

The South Lanarkshire Community Wealth Building (CWB) Strategy aimed to develop resilient, inclusive local economies, with more local employment and a larger and more diverse business base. It set out South Lanarkshire's ambitions across each of the 5 pillars of CWB.

At its meeting on 28 February 2023, the Commission considered examples of how charters and anchor frameworks had been used in different localities to support CWB and it had been agreed that the aims of the South Lanarkshire CWB Strategy could be advanced by the development of a local CWB Charter.

The CWB Progress Group was tasked with developing a draft Charter and associated recommendations. The draft CWB Charter was included at Appendix 1 to the report, along with proposals from the Progress Group relating to its communication, roll-out and uses.

The Charter articulated a "charter pledge" for each of the CWB pillars, which were drawn from statements already contained within the South Lanarkshire CWB Strategy for each pillar, however, they were in a more straightforward language and in most cases, could be supported both at an organisational/collective level or on a personal basis.

To illustrate the pledges, the Charter provided examples of actions which could be taken to support them. Additional points to note about the Charter included:-

- ◆ it covered all 5 pillars
- ◆ it was firmly based on the South Lanarkshire CWB Strategy
- ◆ it was designed to be "at a glance", not a lengthy or complex document

If approved, the Charter would be given appropriate branding and uploaded onto the Council's CWB webpage. Details on additional promotion to raise awareness, boost engagement and realise benefits of the Charter were included in the report.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 28 February 2023 (Paragraph 5)]

8 Third Sector and Community Wealth Building

A report dated 17 August 2023 by the Chief Executive Officer (Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASLan)) was submitted providing an update on third sector perspectives of Community Wealth Building (CWB).

VASLan was the Third Sector Interface (TSI) for South Lanarkshire and its vision, mission and values were detailed in the report. VASLan had 4 main functions as a TSI which were to build capacity, facilitate sector voices, connect partners and be a source of and for third sector intelligence. Its current organisational strategy "Moving to Action 2022-24", had 6 strategic objectives which were detailed in the report.

As part of VASLan's strategic engagement role, it represented the third sector locally and cross-sector with Community Planning Partners. VASLan had a seat on the CWB Commission since its inception and had chaired the CWB Progress Group since January 2022 which, to date, had been very local authority driven but with an openness for cross-sector partner contributions. The report aimed to outline the third sector's relationship with CWB to date.

Details of the sector's economic contribution to South Lanarkshire by locality annual revenues, numbers of employees and volunteering were detailed in the report. It was suggested that this data could complement both the area profiling tool and locality discussions.

An overview was given on the current context of the public sector and other bodies. The third sector, volunteers, community organisations and social enterprises, were VASLan's line of sight for what was happening within communities and data was provided which framed progress to date against the strategic objectives.

The Third Sector Locality Networks, supported by the Health and Social Care Partnership, were formed in the summer of 2022 as part of VASLan's voice and to influence work to ensure the third sector was heard. The Networks replaced the Locality Forums and had increased autonomy and direction provided by lead third sector partners, as opposed to VASLan itself.

Consistent feedback from all localities suggested there was a lack of awareness of what CWB was and how people could be involved. This identified a clear gap and need for a partnership approach in better engaging with communities to increase participation at a local level. In response to this, in spring 2023 further engagement sessions were held with third sector partners to better understand how they would like VASLan to support communities improve their understanding and participate in CWB as well as 2 sessions held in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire. With the development of a CWB Charter, it was important that those sessions were followed up with in person conversations.

Therefore, it was proposed that:-

- ◆ partners collaborate on community engagement activities to promote CWB and that the Scottish Government/COSLA's Local Governance Review (LGR) provide an opportunity to start this piece of work
- ◆ CWB be added to a Community Planning Partnership programme of community engagement that was scheduled to take place across September and October 2023 to discuss shared decision-making in the context of the LGR

The Social Enterprise Strategy and Action Plan were presented to the CWB Commission in June 2023. South Lanarkshire Council and VASLan had generated some quick wins to build momentum which were detailed in the report.

The Social Enterprise Network had set out its priorities, as outlined in paragraph 7 of the report. At its second meeting, members agreed that the Network should be more ambitious and its voice should be heard.

Further weightings towards Social Enterprises would be welcomed to aid participation in the competitive environment for contracts. In addition, with the acknowledgement that often what was being bought and sold did not always align, a need for flexibility and adaptation of business models for market potential needed to be realised. Encouragement for Social Enterprises to flex their model, with a fair chance of winning contracts for products and services whilst retaining their social value and impact, would accelerate how CWB was built in South Lanarkshire.

It was suggested that additional research be undertaken to understand the gaps between what was being bought and sold locally in order to support local Social Enterprises to realise the market opportunity.

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

9 Forward Programme for Future Meetings

A report dated 16 August 2023 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted advising of the forward programme for meetings of the Commission and inviting members to suggest topics for inclusion in the Commission's forward programme.

The Commission decided: that the report be noted.

10 Any Other Competent Business

There were no other items of competent business.