

Report

Report to:	South Lanarkshire Council
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2022
Report by:	Chief Executive

Subject:	Council Priorities and Work Programme 2022 to 2027
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:

- ◆ Present a summary of the council's political priorities and work programme following the Local Government Elections.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the contents of the report be approved.
- (2) that the council instructs officers to conduct further community consultation on specific initiatives to deliver on these priorities and report the feedback received to the December 2022 council meeting
- (3) that Executive Directors and officers across Resources will thereafter work with policy leads to bring forward projects and initiatives to be delivered during the term of this council.

3. Background

- 3.1. Following the Local Government Elections held across Scotland on 5 May 2022, the statutory first meeting of the new Council was held on 18 May 2022. A new minority administration was formed following a Labour-Liberal Democrat-Independent agreement to work in partnership.
- 3.2. The top objectives of the partnership are sustainable economic recovery, sustainable income generation and financial resilience and action on climate change. The Administration aim to secure South Lanarkshire's place as one of the best councils in Scotland for the delivery of key public services and opportunities for communities.
- 3.3. This report presents a summary of the priorities outlined by the new administration and as such provides an initial programme of areas of work to be targeted by the council over the current council term. These are presented under three over-arching themes: People, Places and Planet, which articulates with and reflects the themes in the new Council Plan, Connect 2022 to 2027.

4. People

- 4.1. The council and the Community Planning Partnership already have identified tackling poverty as an over-arching theme. This is increasingly important at a time when fuel bills are rising significantly and food and other costs are subject to inflation levels that are at a 30-year high.

4.2. The council will intensify efforts to help our residents and communities during this cost-of-living crisis, continuing to tackle poverty and financial insecurity, starting with a review of anti-poverty strategies to ensure maximum effectiveness. There will also be a focus on raising literacy and numeracy standards and narrowing the poverty-related attainment gap. Other policy areas to be explored include:

- Tackling the cost of the school day, including extending free school meals and breakfast clubs to remove hunger as a barrier to learning, and increasing and extending school clothing grants
- Flexible early years education and care, meeting existing pledges for 3 and 4-year-olds and improving provision for 2-year-olds
- Further support for children's learning following the pandemic and making sure every child has effective access to modern digital technology
- Working with young people and others on a refreshed Youth Strategy
- A renewed focus on support for looked-after young people
- Continue to improve support for ASN children and those with development needs
- Strengthening social care, developing new models of prevention and person-centred care, and investing in the care workforce
- Remobilising Day Services and reviewing community care provision, including improving support for unpaid carers
- Working with partners to promote mental health and wellbeing and address the needs of those affected by lengthy waiting times for mental health services
- Promoting food justice and the local food chain
- Modernising financial advice and support services.
- Investing in our workforce, alleviating work pressures and improving career opportunities.

5. Places

5.4. The council's current capital investment programme for 2022/23 includes plans to continue to build and improve council homes, add to the high-quality education estate in the area by building new classrooms and early years spaces, and maintain the area's road network. The budget process has seen additional money earmarked for roads maintenance, and also initiatives to tackle litter and fly-tipping.

5.5. The administration's priorities are sustainable and innovative economic recovery and development, and tackling climate change. There will be a focus on growing South Lanarkshire's wealth and delivering a new Green Deal that will help lay the foundations of a more equal and inclusive society.

5.6. Additional policy areas to be explored by officers include:

- Developing a new Economic Strategy to pursue a sustainable recovery and innovative growth
- Developing town and village identities, a Town Centre Turnaround Strategy with Town Centre Plans and Master Plans for East Kilbride and Hamilton
- Committing to additional school provision in Community Growth Areas
- Marketing South Lanarkshire as a great place to live, work/do business, study and visit
- Keeping South Lanarkshire at the forefront of Community Wealth Building in Scotland, including using the council's spending power to support local jobs and town centres.
- Additional work to tackle litter, graffiti and fly-tipping

- Active travel initiatives and safe routes for pedestrians
- Expanding the council's housebuilding programme, and working with other social landlords to build more affordable green homes for rent
- Improving the local housing environment and tackling the backlog in roof and fabric repairs.
- Reviewing public transport provision, promoting greater public control of the bus network, and supporting greater integration
- Integrating Clydesdale STAG proposals into the Transport Strategy
- Renewing the relationship between the council and SLLC and getting plans for investment in leisure facilities back on track
- Protecting and modernising libraries as hubs for multiple community uses, and making them more sustainable by including council and community services where appropriate
- Investing in play equipment, including accessible play equipment
- Reviewing the powers and role of the Area Committees and strengthening the Rural Task Force

6. Planet

6.1. One of the priority areas under Places above was sustainable growth, and clearly this also overlaps with the Planet theme. As a sign of the importance of this area of policy, the partnership administration has already given the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee full committee status, on a par with the five Resource committees.

6.2. Additional policy areas to be explored by officers include:

- Developing a Single Climate Change Action Plan to ramp up climate change action and the transition to net zero.
- Building a Green New Deal for South Lanarkshire, with a heightened focus on creating green jobs, green homes, greener communities and facilities. Investing in retrofitting and decarbonisation.
- Maximising the economic contribution of the low carbon, manufacturing, events, tourism and creative industry sectors
- Improving infrastructure to support Electric Vehicles
- Improving recycling across South Lanarkshire, with better facilities in flatted and tenemental areas
- Supporting innovative renewable energy projects and low carbon initiatives.
- Developing a Safe Routes Strategy and promoting modal shift to encourage more walking and cycling.

7. Next steps

7.1. This report sets out aspirations for the council's programme of work following the local government elections. Subject to council agreement, officers will conduct further community consultation on specific initiatives to deliver on these priorities and report the feedback received to the December 2022 council meeting. Each Resource will thereafter seek to take these forward as appropriate, with Executive Directors acting in consultation with the policy leads. Specific projects and proposals will be brought forward to the relevant committees for approval.

7.2. In addition to the above consultation activities, an "Ideas Letterbox" will be developed on the council website. This will be promoted using communications channels to encourage the public to share ideas on how to improve South Lanarkshire.

8. Employee Implications

- 8.1. The programme of work will be undertaken by employees across the council.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1. The revenue budget for 2022/2023 was agreed in February 2022. The programme of work will be required to operate within that budget, and in the longer term will be aligned with the council's financial strategy.

10. Strategic Environment Assessment

- 10.1. As specific proposals are brought forward to Resource committees or other approving bodies, consideration will be needed into whether they require to undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and Section 15 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 11.1. Equally, as proposals are brought forward to Resource committees or other approving bodies, consideration may be needed into whether they require to undergo an Equality Impact Assessment and any consultation with specific groups or communities.

Cleland Sneddon
Chief Executive

24 May 2022

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values/Ambitions

- Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and tackle disadvantage
- Get it right for children and young people
- Improve health, care and wellbeing
- Ensure communities are safe, strong and sustainable

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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