

**To:** Leadership Board

**On:** 17 February 2016

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**Report by:** Chief Executive

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**Heading:** Strategic Partnership Agreement between Renfrewshire Council and the University of the West of Scotland (UWS)

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## **1 Summary**

- 1.1 The Council and the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) are committed to partnership working and are seeking to strengthen and focus collaboration on key areas of strategic importance for both organisations. This report seeks approval for the Council to enter into a Strategic Partnership Agreement with UWS which will provide a framework for this partnership working over the next two years.
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## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
- Approve the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) between the Council and the University of the West of Scotland (UWS);
  - note that the University of the West of Scotland is submitting the SPA for formal approval by its Executive Board in parallel with the Council's approval process.

## **3 Strategic Partnership Agreement**

- 3.1 The University of the West of Scotland and the Council have a strong history of collaboration and the University is an active partner in the Community Planning arrangements for Renfrewshire. Both organisations have ambitious and far reaching strategic plans aimed at enhancing the

wellbeing and life chances of the citizens and communities of Renfrewshire and the University's students.

- 3.2 Both organisations recognise the value to be gained from effective and efficient collaboration, but acknowledge that it is essential in the current constrained public sector fiscal environment that our finite resources are focussed on those high priority areas of common strategic interest and where joint working will deliver maximum public value.
- 3.3 An analysis and comparison of the strategic plans for both organisations has been carried out to identify those priority areas which have been grouped into four main strategic themes:
- Place
  - Economy and Jobs
  - Learning
  - Expertise and Innovation
- 3.4 The Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) has been created to provide a robust framework within which collaborative activity across these four strategic themes can be successfully developed and delivered. The proposed SPA document is attached for reference with this report. This contains more detail on these strategic themes and also sets out the proposed governance arrangements, joint working principles and period of the agreement.
- 3.5 In relation to governance, the Council Leader and UWS Principal will act as sponsors for the SPA and an Executive Board, drawn from the Council and the UWS Management Teams, will oversee progress of the collaborative activity covered by the SPA. Each organisation will also appoint a Lead Officer for each of the four strategic themes who will be responsible for co-ordinating joint working.
- 3.6 It is proposed that the SPA will run from the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 to allow for the formation of a new Council Administration following the May 2017 Council elections and for the outcome of the Paisley UK City of Culture 2021 bid to be known. It is the expectation of both parties that this SPA would be replaced by a new agreement which would reflect any changes to the priorities of both organisations at that time.
- 3.7 The Council is statutorily responsible for co-ordinating Community Planning within Renfrewshire and seeks to do this in the most effective and efficient manner. The current arrangements for Community Planning are to be reviewed in light of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and it is the intention that this SPA will form part of the revised Community Planning arrangements. The aim will be to enhance the effectiveness of collaboration between the University and the Council within the local framework for Community Planning.

- 3.8 The Council is also in discussion with West College Scotland to create the same type of Strategic Partnership Agreement and this will be brought to a future Leadership Board for approval.

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### **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** – The proposed SPA will create opportunities for sharing resources and collaborative working efficiencies.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – No implications.
3. **Community Planning** – The proposed SPA will support the strengthening of Community Planning arrangements in Renfrewshire.
4. **Legal** – No implications
5. **Property/Assets** – The proposed SPA will strengthen joint planning by UWS and the Council on property and assets.
6. **Information Technology** – No implications.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – No implications.
8. **Health & Safety** – No implications.
9. **Procurement** – The proposed SPA may create opportunities for benefits through joint procurement.
10. **Risk** - These will be managed through the Council's risk management arrangements.
11. **Privacy Impact** – No implications.

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### **List of Background Papers**

- (a) Background Paper 1 (Attached): Strategic Partnership Agreement between Renfrewshire Council and the University of the West of Scotland

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Chief Executive's Service for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is David Amos, Head of Policy and Commissioning, 0141 618 4702, david.amos@renfrewshire.gcsx.gov.uk

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### **Author:**

David Amos, Head of Policy and Commissioning 01416184702





## **Strategic Partnership Agreement**

**between**

**Renfrewshire Council and the University of the West of Scotland**



## FOREWORD

<b>PICTURE</b> Professor Mahoney	<b>PICTURE</b> Cllr Macmillan
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*“Our two organisations have ambitious and far reaching strategic development plans aimed at enhancing the wellbeing and life chances of the University’s students and the citizens and communities of Renfrewshire.*

*As key partners and neighbours within the Renfrewshire area we are committed to supporting each other achieve our strategic objectives and we have identified a number of areas where close collaboration will deliver significant mutual benefit for our two organisations.*

*This Strategic Partnership Agreement has been created to provide a robust framework within which this collaborative activity can be successfully developed and delivered. We believe this is an important step forward in partnership working and demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our finite resources are focussed on those areas where joint working will deliver maximum public value.”*

Professor Craig Mahoney  
Principal  
University of the West of Scotland

Councillor Mark Macmillan  
Leader  
Renfrewshire Council

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## **1 PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT**

The University of the West of Scotland (the University) and Renfrewshire Council (the Council) are key organisations within the Renfrewshire area and each is committed to working collaboratively with the other to support the achievement of their respective strategic objectives.

This Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) sets out how the University and the Council will strengthen this relationship and focus resources on those high priority areas that are common to both organisation's strategic plans.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

The University and the Council have a history of collaboration and the University is an active partner in the Community Planning arrangements for Renfrewshire. Both organisations have ambitious strategic plans which are being implemented within a constrained public sector fiscal environment. Both organisations recognise the value to be gained from effective and efficient collaboration.

A mapping exercise of contacts between the two organisations has been carried out. This identified that a significant amount of contact was taking place on a wide range of matters from routine operational issues to significant strategic initiatives.

Going forward, both organisations wish to strengthen collaboration by streamlining contact arrangements and ensuring that their finite resources are focussed on those areas of strongest common strategic interest. An analysis and comparison of the strategic plans for both organisations has been carried out to identify those areas and which are outlined in the following section.

### 3 FOCUS AREA FOR COLLABORATION

The focus areas for this SPA have been grouped into four key strategic themes as outlined in the table below.

Strategic Theme	Renfrewshire Council Strategic Priorities	University of the West of Scotland Strategic Priorities
PLACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regeneration of Paisley town centre</li> <li>• City of Culture 2021 Bid</li> <li>• Tackling Poverty</li> <li>• Carbon footprint reduction</li> <li>• Digital access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paisley Campus Development</li> <li>• Sports facilities Development</li> <li>• Improving Paisley as a location for students</li> <li>• Supporting cultural and social activity</li> <li>• Fulfilling the University's civic role</li> </ul>
ECONOMY & JOBS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Deal</li> <li>• More and better jobs for Renfrewshire</li> <li>• Tackling Poverty</li> <li>• Increasing business start ups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive destinations for graduates</li> <li>• University spin outs, business incubation and knowledge transfer</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> </ul>
LEARNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the attainment gap and raising overall attainment of Renfrewshire's young people.</li> <li>• Improving outcomes for "looked after" young people.</li> <li>• Positive destinations for school leavers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UWS as University of choice.</li> <li>• Collaboration with Renfrewshire Schools/West College Scotland and supporting transition for secondary pupils to university</li> </ul>
EXPERTISE & INNOVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving access to expertise and resources within UWS.</li> <li>• Creating an environment that encourages the testing of new ideas and innovations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing UWS as a provider of commercial services (such as consultancy and product development)</li> <li>• Identifying research and student project opportunities in "live" environment.</li> <li>• Exploiting key areas of UWS research and expertise to support innovation within the local community</li> </ul>

## 4 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The SPA will be governed by a Strategic Partnership Board, supported by a Lead Officers Group. The membership, responsibilities and meeting frequency of these two groups is detailed in Annex 1.

### Meeting frequency

Twice yearly

Thrice yearly

Quarterly

As required



### **Role of Lead Officers**

The University and the Council will identify individual Lead Officers for each of the strategic focus areas. These officers will be responsible for co-ordinating their organisations input to the relevant workstreams supporting these areas.

The University and the Council will also identify a single Senior Officer with overall responsibility for managing the processes associated with this SPA and ensuring its effective operation.

### **Linkage with Community Planning**

The Council is statutorily responsible for co-ordinating Community Planning within Renfrewshire and seeks to do this in the most effective and efficient manner. The current arrangements for Community Planning are to be reviewed in light of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and it is the intention that this SPA will form part of the revised Community Planning arrangements. The aim will be to enhance the effectiveness of collaboration between the University and the Council and maximise the value gained from the resources invested.

## 5 JOINT WORKING PRINCIPLES

The University and the Council wish to use this SPA to strengthen the relationship between the two organisations in support of their mutual objectives. This will be achieved by adopting the following principles:

Principal	Behaviours
Clarity	Ensuring that the basis for collaboration is clearly articulated and the understood by both partners.
Mutual understanding and respect for differences	Seeking to understanding the specific environment and constraints faced by each partner and respecting those areas of differences.
Supportive	Committing to be supportive of each partner's strategic objectives.
Equality	Working together on the basis of an equal standing.
Openness and honesty	Commitment to dealing with each other in an open and honest matter and constructively seeking to resolve any issues/conflicts that emerge.
Fairness	Seeking to maintain fairness in all dealings between partners.
Informative	Seeking to keep each other informed of important developments and initiatives.
Confidentiality	Maintaining confidentiality as appropriate to the information made available by partners.
Best use of time and resources	Ensuring that all collaborative activities seek to make best use of partner's finite resources and expertise.

## 6 PERIOD OF AGREEMENT

The agreement will run from 1 March 2016 to 31 December 2017. This period has been chosen to allow for Council elections in May 2017 to take place and for the priorities of the new Administration to be identified. It will also allow for the submission of the Paisley UK City of Culture 20121 bid. It is the expectation of both parties that this SPA would be replaced by a new agreement which would reflect any changes to the priorities of both organisations.

## Strategic Partnership Agreement Governance arrangements

### Strategic Partnership Sponsors

Sponsors	Responsibilities	Meeting frequency
<p>UWS Principal – Professor Craig Mahoney</p> <p>RC Leader – Cllr Mark Macmillan</p>	<p>To strengthen relationships between the two organisations and deepen understanding of each others strategic priorities and challenges.</p> <p>To maintain strategic oversight of the SPA.</p> <p>To identify and agree new matters to be referred to the Executive Officers Group for development.</p> <p>To consider recommendations made by the Executive Board for changes to the SPA.</p>	Twice yearly:

### Executive Board

Membership	Responsibilities	Meeting frequency
<p>UWS Depute Principal</p> <p>UWS Senior Management Team</p> <p>UWS Coordinating Officer</p> <p>RC Chief Executive</p> <p>RC Senior Management Team</p> <p>RC Coordinating Officer</p>	<p>To strengthen relationships between the two organisations and deepen understanding of each others strategic priorities and challenges.</p> <p>To oversee progress of the collaborative activity covered by the SPA and discuss and resolve any issues referred from the Lead Officers Group.</p> <p>To consider any matters referred for development by the SPA Sponsors and to instruct the Lead Officers to undertake development work as appropriate.</p> <p>To make recommendations to the SPA Sponsors for changes to the SPA.</p>	Thrice yearly:

### Lead Officers Group

Membership	Responsibilities	Meeting frequency
<p>UWS</p> <p>Place – Gordon Hunt</p> <p>Economy– Meg Dunn</p> <p>Learning – Meg Dunn</p> <p>Expertise – Johnny Mone</p> <p>RC</p> <p>Place – Stuart Macmillan</p> <p>Economy – Alastair Morrison</p> <p>Learning – Gordon McKinlay</p> <p>Expertise – David Amos</p>	<p>To develop and progress the workstreams within each of the four strategic themes.</p> <p>To discuss and resolve any issues relating to cross cutting matters within the four strategic themes.</p> <p>To identify any issues for referral to the Strategic Partnership Group.</p> <p>To agree and prepare reports for the Executive Group and the Strategic Partnership Sponsors.</p>	<p>Quarterly:</p> <p>Note: lead officers may also meet on an ad-hoc basis as appropriate.</p>

**SPA Coordinating Officers**

Officers	Responsibilities	Meeting frequency
<p>UWS – Gordon Hunt, Head of External Engagement</p> <p>RC – David Amos, Head of Policy and Commissioning</p>	<p>To manage the processes associated with the SPA and ensure its effective operation.</p> <p>To co-ordinate the activity of the Lead officer's Group, identify and resolve any duplication, overlap or in-consistencies etc.</p> <p>To maintain oversight of contacts between the two organisations and act as first point of contact for consideration of new opportunities.</p>	<p>As per Lead Officers Group and ad-hoc as required.</p>