

To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following on from the “Analysis of Renfrewshire’s Business Growth Sectors” report to Board in November 2022, this report highlights the recommendations from the second stage report produced by Business Pointer for the Council. This report also states the proposed actions officers will take to try and capitalise on the area’s economic and business development opportunities.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
- (i) notes the content of the content of this report and associated appendix.
 - (ii) notes the actions proposed in respect of recommendations suggested in the Growth Sector Study.
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3. Background

- 3.1 At the start of 2022, the Council identified a need to engage specialist advice as to which sectors Renfrewshire should be targeting to support business growth and secure inward investment. EKOS were commissioned to carry out this work in April 2022 and the results of this commission were reported to this board on 1 November 2022. That report highlighted that there are several opportunities which Renfrewshire needs to capitalise on to support the growth of its economy further. These include having a stronger ‘local focus’ on current strengths in sectors such as manufacturing, engineering and life sciences. Specifically, it highlighted the need for the Council to play a more significant role in identifying new development opportunities and having stronger relationships with key players within these sectors. There is also a need for an injection of new skills to address potential new economic opportunities.

- 3.2 Business Pointer were appointed in 2022, to highlight potential key actions which could be taken by the Council to deliver on the recommendations of the EKOS report and the ambitious economic aspirations outlined in the Council's Economic Strategy (2019). Specifically, Business Pointer aimed to reconcile existing priorities, team capacity and skills engaged in the economic development and regeneration functions of the Chief Executive's Service, with the future opportunities and challenges identified by EKOS and the Economic Strategy.

4 Situation Analysis

- 4.1 Business Pointer's report highlights what is currently working well within the Council and what could be done better in respect of sectoral business growth and development.
- 4.2 Services within the Council which are working well include Business Gateway and the advice it offers to small and medium sized businesses. The Council's Retail Improvement Scheme and InCube Creative Programme were also highlighted as positive services the Council provides. At a wider level, progress at the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District (AMIDS), the delivery of the Council's City Deal Programme and investment in Paisley Town Centre were seen as positives in respect of driving Renfrewshire's economic activity.
- 4.3 The report also investigated the relationships, policies and procedures of Council services that could be working better in respect of delivering the Economic Strategy. Key areas of improvement highlighted include enhanced partnership working, better communication with the wider business community, the requirement to grow and increase visibility of Renfrewshire's inward investment proposition and the need to achieve supply chain growth.
- 4.4 Overall, the report highlights the need for the Council to take a stronger leadership and communication role, enhancing its employment and business services as well as aligning resources to better deliver sector growth and the Economic Strategy's ambitions and targets.

5 Sectors, Interventions and the Way Forward

- 5.1 Having identified the key areas for improvement, the report highlights the sectors and activities which the Council can have a proactive influence in to address these issues:
- *Tourism* - With the new Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan currently in development, which will set out key priorities and enhancements post COVID, there is an opportunity to recalibrate the sector locally. There is a need for greater industry engagement, marketing and strategic development.
 - *Creative and Cultural Industries* - The creative industries sector is growing at regional, national, and UK-wide levels, therefore there is a strong case for the Council to facilitate further growth in this sector.

Specifically, the Council needs to continue with its support of the performing and creative arts and increase its involvement in supporting commercial manufacturing-related design and computer consultancy/digital services.

- *Green and Sustainable* - There is a need for more businesses within Renfrewshire to adopt green practices to meet local and national emission targets. The Council needs to continue its ongoing green economy work, engaging directly with local businesses on how they can become more sustainable.
- *Business Gateway* - Whilst the Business Gateway service of the Council is currently operating well, the report highlights some additional areas for improvement including the sharing of databases within the Council supporting the marketing of services, events and other initiatives.
- *Inward Investment* - There is a requirement for Renfrewshire to be a more visible inward investment location and for the Council to create, sustain and manage stronger relationships with organisations who influence inward investment such as Scottish Development International (SDI), NMIS, universities etc. The report also mentions the need for a more developed marketing and product portfolio with collateral created to support the handling of investment enquiries. Additional land supply also needs to be identified and developed to accommodate inward investment requirements that materialise.
- *Relationship Management (Working with Key Influencers, Stakeholders and Businesses)* - The report identifies gaps between the Council and major influencers and stakeholders at one level, and with business operators working across Renfrewshire at another. Business Pointer recommend that the Council should be introducing a client account management philosophy so that nominated officers are aware of what is happening at key economic and investment locations across Renfrewshire e.g. Hillington, Inchinnan, Westway, AMIDS, Braehead etc.

5.2 In conclusion, the report highlights that Council staff should be given specific responsibilities to be more proactive, allowing more meaningful and effective engagement with key stakeholders and businesses across Renfrewshire. There is also a need to present a more coherent inward investment proposition to drive future economic growth and development in the area.

6 Recommendations

6.1 In final section of the report Business Pointer provides conclusions and recommendations to enhance the Council's economic and business growth services.

Officers have now reviewed these and propose the following actions:

1. Adopting a relationship management or account management philosophy

Officers note the requirement to understand local business needs better. Senior managers will now be responsible for fostering relationships with key businesses in the area and will share key information among Council teams to support these businesses further where possible.

2. Appoint a new Tourism Account Manager

Funding has been secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund to create a new post titled *Business Development Officer – Tourism*. Initially the post will run to March 2025 and the postholder key duties will include developing strong, long-term relationships with tourism businesses and operators, providing business advice and guidance where required. They will also be responsible for attracting and converting new tourism related enquiries, creating local job growth and boosting the economic output of the sector.

3. Action Plan for the delivery of green and sustainable interventions

There are a range of existing programmes in place within the Council which are aimed at encouraging businesses to adopt green and sustainable interventions which will contribute to reducing carbon emissions. These include the Net Zero Grant which offers local businesses in Renfrewshire funding to allow them to make changes to their business premises and operations to reduce their carbon footprint. Officers will continue to look for ways to extend this programme of support further.

4. Inward investment

Officers will develop an inward investment webpage on the Council's website. This will be a single page which signposts where development opportunities / available sites exist within Renfrewshire. It will be created with in conjunction with key stakeholders such as the owners of Hillington and Westway and the webpage will provide links to their respective pages. The page will also highlight any future development opportunities at AMIDS and a single point of reference will be provided who will respond to any investment enquiries.

5. Economic Leadership Panel

Officers are currently reviewing the future role of the panel and whether it should continue in its current format.

6. Reaching the business community

Officers will investigate running a series of economic conferences which will foster debate and discussion and will provide local businesses to come together and network. Each conference will have a different theme, enabling a wide range of businesses to be targeted.

7. Supply chain development

Economic Development and Procurement teams in the Council have been developing and delivering a wide range of new supports to Renfrewshire businesses to encourage them to bid for public sector contracts and get on the Council's supply chain. This builds on existing work with the Supplier Development Programme and Business Gateway support. The main driver of this is work around the Community Wealth Building agenda and the aim of increasing and sustaining local economic growth and also increasing Council, and other public sector spend, in the local area.

The development of economic conferences will also provide networking opportunities which ultimately could lead to future supply chains being formed amongst SMEs.

8. Business Gateway

Funding has been secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund to create a Challenge Fund to bring added value and additional support to Renfrewshire's indigenous businesses enabling programmes of support to address their specific needs.

9. Business analytics

Scotland has more than 120 public organisations in receipt of funding from Scottish Government (SG) who then direct those funds to aid the growth of Scotland's business base. The Business Support Partnership is working on a shared approach to data and analytics, (for example Companies House, non-domestic rates, Dunn and Bradstreet Business Database, SIMD, etc) to create a Master Customer Record (MCR), which will give a more insightful view of the companies we all work with. This should provide a reliable source of information which will allow officers to report accurately on KPIs etc.

7 Next steps

- 7.1 Officers will seek to progress the actions outlined above and will update the Board where appropriate.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – No additional finance is sought. All funding is accounted for within existing Council budgets.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.

3. **Community/Council Planning –**

- **Jobs and the Economy** – Implementation of the recommendations of the report could support more investment and jobs within the local economy.

4. **Legal** – None.

5. **Property/Assets** – None.

6. **Information Technology** – None.

7. **Equality & Human Rights**

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.

8. **Health & Safety** – None.

9. **Procurement** – None.

10. **Risk** – None.

11. **Privacy Impact** - None.

12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable.

13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable.

List of Background Papers

None.

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Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

Final Report

April 2023

Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

Final Report, April 2023

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Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

Final Report, April 2023

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

The Council's 2020–2030 Economic Strategy outlined the challenges and the interventions necessary to successfully deliver to the Renfrewshire economy, and while the COVID pandemic intervened, it is considered by the senior management team that now is the right the time to look and determine what actions are needed to deliver the 2030 targets.

This report is the second part of the Council's approach to defining what actions should be taken to capitalise on the area's economic and business development opportunities and how to deliver them:

- EKOS undertook a Growth Sector Study in 2022 to analyse growth sectors and identify sectoral strengths and weaknesses;
- This commission addresses the organisational implications for the relevant officer teams to successfully deliver to the Council's Economic Strategy ambitions.

Our task is to identify what the Council needs to do internally to progress implementation of the Economic Strategy and the Growth Sector Study and how it needs to align with partners and stakeholders externally who have, and could have a greater, impact on the economy.

Our brief has been to reconcile existing priorities, team capacity and skills engaged in the Economy and Regeneration functions of the Chief Executive's Service, with future opportunities and challenges identified by EKOS and to build on the Council's Economic Strategy ambitions. This means that we've been asked to comment on and make recommendations on a future account management structure and focus and how this should or could integrate with existing functions.

2. Background

EKOS' report identified growth sectors and potential components of what should be included in the business and inward investment strategy for the Council. Our interpretation of Ekos' analysis is that these are some of the implications for the Council to deliver to the opportunities identified:

- There is a need for the internal staff team to address existing priorities and still be able to address new opportunities identified, which has resource implications
- There is a need for an injection of new skills to be able to address these opportunities
- There are fundamental gaps in the external communications between the business development team within the Council and elements of the business community as well as with key stakeholders.

3. Situation Analysis

The report looks in detail at what is working well and what could work better, as seen in EKOS' and our own analysis and by stakeholders and partners.

Among the services that are working well are: Business Gateway and advice for small and medium sized businesses; Employability; AMIDS, MMIC, NMIS, the Retail Improvement Scheme, Paisley Town Centre investments and Paisley regeneration, connections with the Glasgow City Region and several more.

We explore in more detail the policies, procedures, relationships and focus of services that aren't working so well, since we need to address and enhance these areas to build both the Council's capacity for intervention and partners' roles in delivering to a shared Economic Strategy and agenda.

- Arguably, the **Economic Leadership Panel** could be used to better effect and could be more proactive, especially in supporting engagement and communications with businesses.
- **Regular Business Collaboration and Communication with Stakeholders** – partnerships with key influencers and stakeholders could be enhanced and accelerated considerably. There are limited formal and informal channels of communication making it harder to, amongst others, align stakeholders' priorities with the Economic Strategy; define collaborative opportunities; understand what is happening in R&D, innovation, local and inward investment, skills needs, etc.
- **Engagement and Communication with the Wider Business Community**¹ is weak in contrast to the Council's role in Business Gateway and employability services. The issue is important because there is limited knowledge of who owners and managers are, their sectors, whether they are doing well or need help. Equally, businesses don't know what the Council can offer and will themselves be passive about communicating with the Council. So, even where funds and advice are on offer, take up will be reduced and the costs of marketing higher.
- **Marketing** – the Invest in Renfrewshire web site serves a useful function, but economic development and inward investment dimensions are immature and require development and investment in search to be a first stop for business information and access to services.
- **Inward Investment** – despite AMIDS, Renfrewshire is almost invisible as an inward investment location. The Council doesn't know what businesses in the area might have development or expansion plans and is not active enough in taking the lead with Scottish Development International in placing Renfrewshire on their agenda for inward investment². A key issue will be the preparation of new sites for inward investment³
- **The Green and Sustainable Agenda** – the Council has to influence businesses to be sustainable – and contribute to net zero targets. The Council's influencing and advocacy skills needs to be stepped up to impact businesses. Pivotal to this need is understanding who the businesses and the decision makers within them are, understanding their sectors etc.

¹ And larger companies

² The Council team have been working on an enhanced Inward Investment product portfolio proposition for some time, and this piece of work requires to be concluded to allow influencing and direct responses to inward investment enquiries

³ Which the current Strategic Property Review being conducted by the Council might address

- **Supply Chain Management** – the Economic Strategy highlights supply chain growth, to support businesses. The absence of information and engagement with local businesses makes it hard to intervene and support them to identify suppliers locally. NMIS and MMIC can fulfil this role for their own client group, but we don't know what other opportunities might exist without first undertaking the wider research to map local supply chains, learning from "Meet the Buyer" workshop successes and actively collaborate with NMIS and MMIC.

4. Way Forward and Recommendations

Sectors and activities where the Council can have influence are in:

- **Tourism** – with an action plan due to be produced spring 2023, the agenda will be set for what enhancements should happen. Post Covid, there is an opportunity to recalibrate the sector as well as capitalise on the Paisley town centre investments. The paucity of industry communication suggests a strong person and job specification is needed for a tourism account manager. to manage engagement and joint action with the tourism trade. The account manager will provide the glue required to develop and re- position Renfrewshire Tourism, collaborating with internal and external influencers to deliver the Action Plan⁴.
- **Creative and Cultural Industries** –the performing and creative arts are known and supported, but commercial manufacturing-related design and computer consultancy/ digital services are not. Skills Development Scotland forecasts Renfrewshire growth for these sectors and the Council should market Renfrewshire as a location for them and strengthen engagement and joint action with the design sector. This will help re- position them in Renfrewshire, including prioritising the sector for employability and Business Gateway support⁵.
- **Green and Sustainable** – the role must be energised to contribute to the Council's and Renfrewshire Climate Panel's plans and targets for net zero. This would be through influencing the business sector to adopt green and sustainable practices – targeting responsive companies and broader communication to the full business base, offering a set of tools that will help analyse and define actions to reduce emissions⁶ ⁷.
- **Business Gateway** – while Business Gateway, business and employability services are working well, some improvements could be made.
- **Inward Investment** - inward investment enquiries demand cross Council involvement and responses from elected members, directors and senior managers involved with land and buildings, financial support or incentives, education and skills etc. A clear-cut structure is required to identify lead officer(s)– and how and when others across the Council need to be involved. There is also an absolute need to create, sustain and manage stronger, closer relationships between the Council and e.g. SDI, NMIS, MMIC and the universities, who influence inward investment, also knowing which local companies might have development

⁴ The draft Tourism Account Manager Person Specification is at Appendix 5

⁵ The Council is also actively involved in the Creative and Cultural Industries Action Plan for the Glasgow City region, with specific actions for the Council identified in this

⁶ Working with the new Head of Climate, Public Protection and Roads at the Council, as required

⁷ The Council has a prominent role in the Glasgow City Region approach to sustainability

plans, together with the identification and preparation of sites to accommodate new investment.

- **Relationship Management: Working with Key Influencers, Stakeholders and Businesses** - the fundamental gap between the Council's economic and business teams with major influencers and stakeholders at one level and with business operators working across Renfrewshire at another should be addressed by introducing a client account management philosophy and approach so that nominated officers know what is happening at e.g. Hillington, Inchinnan, Westway Park, AMIDS, Braehead etc. and who the companies are. Equally, nominated senior officers need to be given the account management responsibility to work with key stakeholders – specifically NMIS, MMIC, UWS, , SDI etc. This means adapting the roles of officers to take on this role and a senior manager taking on a co-ordinating role within the Council.

5. Recommendations

Our conclusions and recommendations are that Renfrewshire Council should seek to amplify their economic and business growth services and impact by implementing a number of changes – which we detail below:

1. To adopt a **relationship management or account management** philosophy and approach within the service to enable closer working with stakeholders, influencers, partners and rank and file businesses across the economy, at the **direction of a lead, senior manager** – who might be an existing or new appointment. Alongside this change in working practices, a **coaching and training plan** is required to help staff achieve what will be expected of them through this proactive account management approach
2. A **Tourism Account Manager should be appointed** with the responsibility to work with stakeholders in the tourism sector and encourage collaboration, product development and joint marketing
3. A sector specific **action plan for the creative and cultural sector**⁸ would complement that currently being prepared for tourism
4. Develop an **Action Plan for the delivery of green and sustainable interventions** and actions to encourage businesses to adopt green and sustainable targets that contribute to delivering net zero emissions
5. Develop a planning and reporting structure that will allow for Renfrewshire to position itself for **inward investment** and be able to respond to enquiries and opportunities – this would include the development of an inward investment profile (including marketing collateral) and product portfolio (cataloguing sites, skills and other needs of inward investors) and preparing new sites, working with intermediaries and influencers (through the recommended account management system) and identify the team of people who need to be involved (including touch points from Leader and Chief Executive to key staff)
6. Potentially the role of the **Economic Leadership Panel** should be expanded to help gather intelligence and be part of the advocacy of the area for new and inward investment. This might necessitate strengthening the membership to include key partners not on the Panel at the moment

⁸ Especially focusing on the commercial sector

7. Prepare a **communications plan** for communicating with the business community; this might include an **annual Economic Conference**, facilitated for debate and discussion with the business community to support communication
8. Undertake the research to **map local supply chains** and identify opportunities for local businesses
9. Evaluate the benefits or otherwise of keeping the **Business Gateway service inhouse or contracting out** and review **Business Gateway processes** to see whether time and resource can be released
10. Research, plan and adjust research methodologies to generate a **broader range of metrics based on economic, social and environmental factors** to report accurately on KPIs that meet the Economic Strategy targets. Equally, plan for and develop a **database of businesses** across the area (identifying their owners, managers, employment, functions etc.) in order to support market research, support account managers and generate effective communications with them.

Business Pointer, April 2023

Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study

Final Report, February 2023

1. Introduction

The Renfrewshire economy comprises some 4,720 businesses (2021) with 83,750 people in employment (down from a peak of 87,000 in 2018)⁹ and a total estimated population in mid-2021 of 179,940¹⁰. The Council's 2020–2030 Economic Strategy outlined the challenges and the interventions necessary to successfully deliver benefits to the Renfrewshire economy. The Strategy was a response to the inherent opportunities in the Renfrewshire economy and community and while the COVID pandemic intervened, the time is now pertinent to look see what actions are needed to deliver the 2030 targets. These are related to jobs, the size of the economy, the working-age population, economic inactivity, skills and growth of Renfrewshire's manufacturing sector.

This report is the second part of Renfrewshire Council's approach to defining what actions should be taken to capitalise on the area's economic and business development opportunities and how to deliver them:

- EKOS was appointed to undertake a Growth Sector Study in 2022 to analyse growth sectors and support Renfrewshire Council to identify current sectoral strengths and weaknesses and recommendations on which key sectors should be targeted for future investment;
- Business Pointer's current commission from the Council is to address the outcomes and implications of EKOS' work for the organisation of Council officer teams and recommend where changes in focus and responsibilities are considered necessary to successfully achieve the Council's Economic Strategy ambitions.

This report aims to achieve the second part of the approach – to identify what the Council needs to do internally to progress implementation of the approved Economic Strategy and Growth Sector Study and how it needs to align with partners and stakeholders externally who have, and could have a greater, impact on the economy.

2. Brief, Objectives and Methodology

Our brief has been to reconcile existing priorities and team skills engaged in the Economy and Regeneration functions of the Chief Executive's Department, with future opportunities and challenges identified by EKOS and to build on the Council's Economic Strategy ambitions. So, we aim to support the Council to identify how current activities and priorities can be managed while new tasks are taken on and what the resource implications are.

This means that we've been asked to comment on and make recommendations on a future staff structure and focus and how this should integrate with e.g. business development, supply chain management, inward investment, sectoral priorities and partnership with external and internal influencers and stakeholders.

In detail our objectives for this assessment have been:

- To absorb the Council's and the EKOS strategic framework and growths sector opportunities

⁹ EKOS Analysis of Renfrewshire Growth Sectors, 2022 (report for Renfrewshire Council)

¹⁰ National Records of Scotland

- Review with business leaders, including the Economic Leadership Panel, their views about opportunities and integration with the Council
- Assess national agencies (i.e. Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Development International, Skills Development Scotland) perspectives on opportunities in Renfrewshire and delivery implications
- Internal interviews with key staff in Economic and Business Development to support a review of current structures and priorities.

For the Renfrewshire economy, the objectives of our commission are:

- To reposition and enhance the Council’s role in sectoral and business growth and development
- Align existing resources/ partners to deliver to sector growth ambitions (as defined by the 2020-30 Economic Strategy and tempered by EKOS’s evaluation and our analysis)
- Stimulate and manage collaboration/ enhanced and regular communication with strategic partners
- Advise on the development of an inward investment profile/ product portfolio and identify the customer journey/ process, the team of people who need to be involved (including touch points from CEO/Elected Members and collateral required)
- Identify how to further stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship
- Identify what land and property assets need to be further developed to support innovation, enterprise, incubation and inward investment

3. Background

Development and intervention in Renfrewshire’s economy has to be set against national, regional and local policies and priorities. This can be a complex picture, which EKOS has already articulated and summarised (see Appendix 3), but crucially – and potentially impacting Renfrewshire’s Economic Strategy – there are four emerging cross cutting themes with implications for the Council’s organisation and management of economic and business development (the extent to which they achieve this is explored further below):

- **Delivering inclusive economic growth, wellbeing and fair work** – the narrow, historic, growth focus and over-estimation of the reality of ‘trickle-down’ economic theory, have contributed to the creation of a deeply unbalanced economy in Scotland¹¹. Inclusive growth combines increased prosperity with greater equality, creates opportunities for all of Scotland’s people and places, and distributes the benefits of increased prosperity fairly – initiatives include fair work, enterprise and skills reform, early years expansion, initiatives to narrow the attainment gap and promote fair access to higher education, and Fair Start Scotland. Local supply chain development can play an important role in maximising the local benefits of inward investment to ensure quality, sustainable and diverse employment opportunities for all of Renfrewshire’s people and places.
- **Addressing the climate emergency and securing a ‘just transition’** – Scottish Government’s net zero emissions target by 2045 is echoed by the Council’s target to make Renfrewshire carbon neutral by 2030. The Transition Commission¹² and the Climate Emergency Response Group¹³ highlight how to deliver a fairer, greener, and more resilient Scotland. Crucially for Renfrewshire, this means a strong and compelling green dimension to business development and support.
- **Innovation and digital** – innovation is a key to long term economic performance and inclusive growth, for which manufacturing is a significant feature¹⁴. Some sectors are already adapting and there is close

¹¹ [Scotland’s National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#)

¹² [Advice on a Green Recovery](#) (2020)

¹³ [Scotland’s Green Recovery](#) and [Update to the Climate Change Plan](#)

¹⁴ [Scotland’s Innovation Action Plan](#) and [A Changing Nation: How Scotland will Thrive in a Digital World](#)

alignment too with the SDI's identified opportunities in its Inward Investment Plan: energy transition, decarbonisation of transport; software and IT; digital financial services; digital business services; space; healthtech; transformation of chemical industries; food and drink innovation. The Glasgow City Region Economic Strategy notes that the region contributes to all these areas.

- **Place-making, sustainability and community wealth building** – while the principles associated with place making have already been adopted by Renfrewshire Council, there is still a need to interpret how places operate and where capacity, assets and opportunities lie (i.e. in sectors in (say) industrial locations) in order that good decision-making and best use of assets and resources help ensure the right focus for investment and the best contribution to community wealth making.

Renfrewshire's 2020-2030 Economic Strategy sets out the ambitions and actions to achieve sustained, inclusive growth of the Renfrewshire economy. Its development has been led by the Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel, bringing together leaders from across the private and public sector, enterprise agencies and education and skills experts.

“Renfrewshire is the base for some of the UK’s biggest engineering, technology and logistics companies and home to the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS). International exports from Renfrewshire were valued at £2 .1billion in 2017, 6 .4% of all Scotland’s exports and the second highest in the City Region. The Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce processed over 12,000 export documents in 2018, the third highest in Scotland. Renfrewshire manufacturing generates more than £1billion of those exports with food and drink (£370million), chemical and pharmaceutical (£313million) and metal/machinery fabrication (£298million) our largest exporting sectors. Exports to EU and non-EU nations are evenly split. The food and drink sector is the largest exporter to non-EU countries; chemical and pharmaceutical exports the largest to EU destinations.”

The Economic Strategy was complemented by the post-COVID Economic Framework agreed by the Council¹⁵. Its 10 near term strategic priorities were:

- Creation of a Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel
- Accelerating development of the Glasgow Airport Investment Area (now known as AMIDS)
- Meeting housing needs and aspirations
- Regenerating and investing in Paisley Town Centre
- Developing and investing in our cultural and heritage assets
- Promotion of Renfrewshire
- Tackling disadvantage, targeting deprivation and supporting people
- Skills escalation and development
- Strengthening transport infrastructure
- Outward looking - connecting with the Glasgow City Region

EKOS' report identifies growth sectors and potential components of what should be included in the business and inward investment strategy for the Council. They are explicit about some of the implications for the Council to deliver to the opportunities identified:

- There is a need for the internal staff team to address existing priorities and still be able to address any new opportunities identified
- There is a need for an injection of new skills to be able to address these opportunities

¹⁵ Renfrewshire Economic Recovery Plan, approved by Council 17th December 2020 - [Microsoft Word - Renfrewshire Economic Recovery Plan Council 17 12 20 \(cmis.uk.com\)](https://www.cmis.uk.com)

- There are fundamental gaps in the external communications between the business development team within the Council and elements of the business community (e.g. businesses located in Inchinnan and Westway Industrial Estates or operating within specific sectors) as well as with key stakeholders.

4. Situation Analysis

4.1 What's Working Well?

Before focusing on what needs to be done to reposition and enhance the Council and its partners' roles in sector and business growth and development, it is worthwhile to look at what is working well and where advances have been made since 2020.

The Economic Strategy and post Covid Economic Recovery Plan, together with the four cross cutting themes summarised above, set the tone of what is required to be delivered in economic and business development. The following table details what is working well, as seen by stakeholders and partners. While some weaknesses or inherent difficulties of the following might be evidenced, in the context of the Sectoral Growth Study they demonstrate progress being made.

Renfrewshire Economic Activity – What's Working Well
Business Gateway and advice for small businesses in Renfrewshire ¹⁶
Employability, fair work practises and the Living Wage
Retail Improvement Scheme
InCube Creative Programme
Spend Local Campaign
Paisley First Business Improvement District
Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce membership services
Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland (AMIDS)
Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre (MMIC)
National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS)
University led education and R & D
Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel
Paisley Town Centre investments and Paisley Regeneration
Connecting with the Glasgow City Region
City Deal
Market Renfrewshire and its strengths as a place to live, learn and work
Delivery of the cultural infrastructure programme and the events programme

4.2 What Could Work Better

We explore in more detail the policies, procedures, relationships and focus of services that aren't working so well, since the way forward is designed to address and enhance these areas to build both the Council's capacity for intervention and partners' roles in delivering to a shared Economic Strategy and agenda.

- Arguably, the **Economic Leadership Panel** is not being used to the best effect. Its skills and contribution help determine strategy in reaction to the Council definition of needs, priorities and action. The full capability of the Panel will be realised when it is able to take more of an initiative on the agenda and produce solutions rather than, as now, being responsive. This isn't a dramatic issue and the Panel will we anticipate mature as it gains confidence post Covid together with serving a pivotal role in engagement and communications with

¹⁶ But see note further below

businesses in Renfrewshire. Perhaps, the Panel might be well served with its own dedicated (small) staff resource, to help facilitate this broadening of its agenda¹⁷.

- **Regular Business Collaboration and Communication with Stakeholders** – such partnership between Council officials and key influencers and stakeholders in Renfrewshire (extending beyond the Economic Leadership Panel) is inadequate. By this we mean that limited formal and informal channels of communication exist between appropriate senior Economic and Business Development officials and (say) AMIDS, MMIC, NMIS and the Universities. This makes it harder to:
 - Get the right access point within the Council to explore opportunities and be heard
 - Ensure alignment of stakeholders’ priorities with the Economic Strategy and for the Economic Strategy to learn from and adapt to successes amongst stakeholders
 - Define collaborative opportunities
 - Understand what is happening in R&D, innovation, local and inward investment, skills needs and developments and what employment opportunities might be for Renfrewshire
 - Drive change and recognition in/out of the Council
- **Engagement and Communication with the Wider Business Community** – parallel to the above – and in contrast to the Council’s role in Business Gateway and Employability services – is the lack of focus and commitment of the Council’s engagement and communication with the wider business community. The Chamber of Commerce and Paisley BID both communicate with individuals within the Council and their members and serve a significant role as an intermediary in communications with their members, but their membership numbers don’t encompass the whole Renfrewshire business community. The issue is an important one because:
 - Council officials generally do not know what businesses are on the patch – beyond clients of Business Gateway and Employability services, meaning that they do not know the owners and senior managers, cannot identify sectors that operators are in and don’t know what investment/ growth/ new product development is happening inside these businesses
 - Because of these characteristics, the Council will be unable to support supply chain management, attracting data for use in marketing for Inward Investment and many other benchmarks which would support and enhance the reputation of Renfrewshire as a good area to do business in
 - On a geographical basis – at Hillington, Inchinnan, Westway Park, Glasgow Airport Investment Area, Braehead – businesses and their owners and managers are not known, nor are trends, nor potential demand for industrial and office space
 - An up-to-date and good database of businesses, their owners and managers doesn’t exist making communication and marketing to them impractical and reducing the ability for evidence-based decision making
 - Generally, the Council’s lack of dedicated pro-active resource in this area means that businesses don’t know what the Council can offer and will themselves be passive about communicating with the Council. So, even where funds and advice are on offer, the take up will be significantly reduced and the costs of marketing higher
- **Marketing** – while the Invest in Renfrewshire web site serves a number of useful functions, the economic development and inward investment dimensions are immature and require significant development and investment in search to serve the function of a first stop for business information and services.
- **Inward Investment** – despite AMIDS, Renfrewshire is nearly invisible as an inward investment location. There are several dimensions to this:
 - The Council doesn’t know what businesses in the area might have development or expansion plans (for the reasons articulated in 3 above) and is not the first stop for owners/ managers to explain their proposals and seek support to argue for or help with their developments (skills, funds, space)

¹⁷ This might be something that is worked towards, with commercial sponsorship, or e.g. the Chamber providing this support
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- The Council is perhaps not active enough in taking the lead with Scottish Development International in placing Renfrewshire on their agenda – either to understand inward investment needs, influence infrastructure, site or space to accommodate or help define what other parameters influence inward investment decisions (telecoms, schools, housing, skills availability etc.)
- The Council team has been working on an enhanced Inward Investment product portfolio proposition for some time, and this piece of work requires to be concluded to allow influencing and direct responses to inward investment enquiries. This portfolio needs to be marketed and managed by a nominated individual – with requests for information and enquiries being managed effectively from a strong knowledge base
- The Council’s Strategic Property Review should consider whether and what new sites might be required to accommodate inward investment
- And as articulated in 2 above, partnership with key influencers needs to improve significantly to influence inward invest generated via the Universities, AMIDS, MMIC and NMIS
- **The Green and Sustainable Agenda** – while the Council has committed and invested in a dedicated Sustainability Manager, the activity required now is to influence businesses to be sustainable – and contribute to Scottish Government and Renfrewshire Council’s targets – is at early days, we can learn already that the Council’s influencing and advocacy skills need to be stepped up to have any effect with businesses. Pivotal to this need is understanding who the businesses and the decision makers within them are, understanding the sector they work in and individual business needs. This means that mechanisms for communicating with them be developed (all as described in 3 and 4 above).

“There are two key points to consider here, the first is that the Council needs to reflect on how they can best support businesses to become more sustainable as we aspire to become carbon neutral (net zero) by 2045. Secondly, in doing so how can the Council exploit the economic opportunities related to the net zero agenda to support and create new green businesses and jobs that are accessible for local people. For example, the manufacture, installation, and maintenance of heat pumps will be a key growth area for businesses working in the plumbing, heating, and air conditioning subsector (construction and manufacturing) as we transition away from traditional fossil fuel heating systems.”

“Renfrewshire already has a strong cluster and a large business base working in these sectors, and there is also the research expertise being developed at NMIS, where energy transition is a key theme within the research agenda. This may be an area the Council can exploit in collaboration with industry and Further/Higher Education providers to develop a business support and skills pathway.”¹⁸

We recommend that a Green/ Sustainable Action Plan is developed to allow managers, influencers and the officers involved in business development and regeneration are included to maximise the outputs from effective communication.

- **Supply Chain Management** – the Economic Strategy highlights the ambition to achieve supply chain growth, to help foster an entrepreneurial culture and support the creation of new and growing businesses. Local supply chain development can play an important role in maximising the local benefits of inward investment to ensure quality, sustainable and diverse employment opportunities for all of Renfrewshire’s people and places. The absence of information and engagement with local businesses suggests an inability for the public sector to intervene and support them identify suppliers locally. NMIS can fulfil this role for its own client

¹⁸ EKOS report, ibid

group, but we don't know what other opportunities might exist without first undertaking the wider research to map local supply chains, learning from "Meet the Buyer" workshop successes and actively collaborate with NMIS and MMIC.

4.3 Conclusions from What's Working Well and What Could Work Better

Many elements of the economic and business portfolio are working well. but as we highlight, there are several areas where opportunities might be better capitalised upon:

- The Council take a stronger leadership/ communication role across the portfolio of influencers and stakeholders, to help identify collaborative opportunities, as well as enhance the Council's status
- Renfrewshire Council can position itself as an exemplary, proactive Council delivering best advice and support to businesses in the area
- Support further positive engagement and communication by the Council to support business development and growth
- Enhance the Council's role in economic, employment and business services by strengthening the offer of an efficient one and first stop for business growth
- Better align resources and partners to deliver to sector growth and Economic Strategy ambitions and targets
- Ultimately, support local businesses to access available support

5. Sectors, Interventions and the Way Forward

We detail here the actions needed to address the shortcomings identified above. It's important to say that while the actions catalogued below are a menu, from which the Council can select and prioritise (depending on resources, finance and organisational solutions), they also provide a coherent range of interventions and structural solutions designed to address and deliver more effectively to the Economic Strategy targets.

5.1 Renfrewshire's Key Growth Sectors

EKOS identified and categorised three groupings of business/ sectors and our role now is to select those that the Council and its stakeholders and partners can reasonably influence:

- So while "foundation sectors" of health and social care, construction, hospitality and retail were identified, internal discussions about the Councils' role highlights that only tourism and hospitality can be influenced with the finite resources of the Council
- Growth sectors as defined by Scottish Government comprise financial, creative, energy, life sciences and advanced manufacturing. While AMIDS and in particular NMIS are addressing the manufacturing sector and MMIC the life sciences (and the Council could work more closely with them), the Council should be focusing in on the creative sector as a strong opportunity
- Local niche, specialist and growth sectors in Renfrewshire were suggested as logistics (and distribution) and property asset management, sectors it would be difficult to find a locus for the Council

However EKOS are explicit about the opportunity to work on a place-basis, thus potentially working across sectors with those located at e.g. Inchinnan, Westway, Braehead, the Airport and Hillington. Further analysis and discussion also focused on the green and sustainable sector in addition to the Tourism and Hospitality and creative industries.

5.2 Tourism

In 2021 there were an estimated 3,800 people employed in the sector, in 415 business units¹⁹, with tourism worth £123.7m in the area in 2018²⁰. A parallel piece of work is currently being undertaken by the Council to develop a Tourism Action Plan to replace the last visitor and tourism plan that ran from 2018 to 2021. The research and consultation outcomes from this work feed into this sectoral review.

Post COVID, there is an opportunity to think again about how to recalibrate tourism in Renfrewshire. The very positive experience of hosting successful events and delivering an energetic cultural programme together with the capital investments in Paisley Town centre, in the cultural infrastructure, including the Museum and Art Gallery and at the Town Hall, offer new opportunities for heightening profile and footfall²¹. The proactive management of tourism marketing from within the Council is however counterbalanced by Renfrewshire being in the “shadow” of Glasgow, despite the collaborative nature of marketing and the City Deal, and there is a disconnect between the area and vibrant Glasgow Airport. Equally and most tellingly, the tourism industry’s engagement with the Council or in the strategic development of the sector is limited, potentially restricting collaborative product development, positioning and marketing of enhanced proposition(s) for the area. There are however 2m people living within ½ hour of the area and 3.5m within 1½ hours.

Interventions and Recommendations:

- Confusion and some overlap occur in the respective roles of the Council’s Economic Development, Marketing and OneRen functions, which need resolved
- The paucity of industry communication suggests a strong person and job specification is needed for a business advisor with a background and experience in tourism whose role would be to account manage engagement and joint action with the tourism trade, to help them become more resilient, grow and help enhance the visitor experience. The account manager will provide the glue required to develop and re-position Renfrewshire Tourism, collaborating with internal and external influencers to deliver the Action Plan²².
- The forthcoming Tourism Action Plan will detail other interventions.

5.3 Creative and Cultural Industries

EKOS estimated that there were some 1,900 people employed in the broad creative and cultural sector in Renfrewshire in 2021, with 395 business units. The creative industries have a broad definition, comprising media, performing arts, design, information and communication-related and computer consultancy – so everything from the performing arts to manufacturing related design. Within these statistics, we can see the average employment is just under 5 people.

“There has been substantial growth in the number of people employed in information and communication-related jobs, increasing 100% or by 1250 people between 2016 and 2020. The majority of this growth has been driven by computer consultancy-related employment, which has seen a 17% growth in registered businesses, and 150% growth in the number of people employed. In contrast, the wider Glasgow City Region and Scotland experienced a decrease in the number of registered computer consultancy businesses (-13% and -17% respectively) and much smaller increases in the numbers of people employed in this area (34% and 37%), suggesting that Renfrewshire has particular strengths in this area.”

Skills Development Scotland forecasts that the creative industries will be a growth area for the Renfrewshire economy between 2021 and 2031, with an estimated 11% growth in the number of people employed in the area by 2031. Given the apparent strength of computer consultancy in Renfrewshire, it seems likely that some of this future

¹⁹ Source EKOS

²⁰ VisitScotland estimate

²¹ Although this may need a closer integration of tourism and cultural activities to develop a stronger proposition for the area

²² The draft Tourism Account Manager Person Specification is at Appendix 5

growth will be driven in this area. There may also be potential to capitalise on the strong film and TV sector in the City of Glasgow and develop the Renfrewshire-based production industry.

Given the increasing strength of the creative industries at the regional, national, and UK-wide levels, it follows that Renfrewshire should seek to facilitate further growth in this already expanding sector to support a green recovery post-pandemic and deliver low-carbon jobs into the future.

Interventions and recommendations are as follows:

- Given the groundwork undertaken for the City of Culture bid²³, and the Lottery supported Great Place Scheme²⁴ which pulled together the associated Renfrewshire Heritage Network, it would be appropriate to redefine what the cultural and heritage sectors need in terms of support and intervention. They probably need their own actions plans
- There is no outbound marketing of Renfrewshire as a location for the (commercial) design and creative sector and this should be remedied, to capitalise upon the perceived strengths of the sector. This could also potentially have a knock-on effect on recruitment for the University of the West of Scotland's creative and design related courses
- Since the sector is made up of SMEs and micro businesses, they should be eligible for employability and Business Gateway support – the intervention here is to ensure that the sector is prioritised, with, potentially marketing of such services targeted to them and evaluation of e.g. their incubation and business development and skills needs
- Our proposal is to amend the role of an existing member of staff to focus more on engagement with local creative and cultural businesses
- The comments made below about understanding who is in the sector and having up to date data about the businesses, applies to this sector

5.4 Green and Sustainable

We have highlighted the potential for intervention with businesses to adopt green and sustainable practices as being important in meeting Scottish Government and Council emission targets. EKOS also highlighted the economic opportunities related to supporting and creating new green businesses and jobs, through for example, the manufacture, installation and maintenance of heat pumps.

The Council's Plan for Net Zero sets out how the area will work towards net zero by 2030²⁵, which along with the Renfrewshire Climate Panel, surveyed local businesses to identify how to make immediate and future change possible in the business sector. The actions are well articulated around 5 key themes and actions:

- Clean energy
- Sustainable transport
- Circular economy
- Connected communities
- Resilient place

Independent research was commissioned into the area's current emissions which showed transport was responsible for 34% and both commercial and residential energy usage contributed 29% each - meaning these three areas are responsible for 92% of Renfrewshire total emissions. The research also outlined that the Council itself contributes

²³ Including the report of the Creative Renfrewshire Steering Group

²⁴ Which ended in September 2022

²⁵ [Renfrewshire's Plan for Net Zero - Renfrewshire Website](#)

only 2.5% of all emissions in Renfrewshire, reaffirming that the primary focus should be a leadership approach as climate change cannot be tackled with solely internal transformation.

This reinforces the Economic and Business case to influence the business sector to adopt green and sustainable practices, to help reduce emissions. While this is the philosophy underpinning the appointment of the Green Economy Officer, our perception and that of our consultees, is that the level of activity and communication to the business community, alongside relevant events, has to be stepped up. As EKOS suggest:

“The key learnings will be around how to specifically advise, encourage and engage businesses in the region to work towards Net Zero and understand the impacts of Climate Change. Information from the pilot businesses engaged should help identify local examples, best practice and any barriers/ challenges that can be applicable to other businesses.”

The interventions in this area are therefore:

- The role of the Green Economy function of Economic and Business Development needs to be stepped up to firstly identify and prioritise businesses that are ready and willing to be influenced on their green agenda (“pilot businesses” as identified above) and secondly, broaden the communication to the full business base, to offer a set of tools that will help analyse and define actions to reduce emissions These should be essential elements in an action plan for delivering green and sustainable change in the business sector
- Develop these tools and business advice that can be rolled out and offered to businesses in Renfrewshire
- Commission Green Tourism to offer specific advice to tourism and hospitality businesses on how they can measure their carbon footprint and taken ameliorative action to decarbonise and reduce their carbon footprint and become net zero. Green Tourism have a set of tools and webinars which could be rolled out to help this sector (again, part of the action plan)
- Commission research to drill down into those businesses in the area that are working in e.g. construction and manufacturing, which can transition away from traditional fossil fuel heating systems. This might best be done with NMIS, where energy transition is a key theme within the research agenda
- EKOS also recommended collaboration with industry and Further and Higher Education providers to develop a business support and skills pathway for the green sector
- The comments made below about understanding who is in the sector and having up to date data about the businesses, applies to this sector
- There is potential for an account management structure for engagement with external players in the green and sustainable sector – this would include (re)defining key objectives and outputs for the Council from this role and the internal reporting structure

5.5 Business Gateway

We highlighted that broadly Business Gateway, business and employability services are working well²⁶. We just have a few comments to make about what could be improved, having resources implications and potentially efficiencies, which could help with delivery of some of the other changes to interventions in the economy.

- Along with other employability services, databases aren't shared inside the Council, suggesting that marketing of services, events and other initiatives (e.g. workshops, sustainability initiatives) or gathering of economic and business data through research will be harder to achieve²⁷
- Additional administration resources could be beneficial to the client service team
- Investment in new research resources for the team, i.e. financial performance subscriptions, would provide current and relevant financial intelligence on client businesses and individuals at the click of a button i.e. credit scores. This small investment could bring new criteria for measuring grant/ funding applications

5.6 Inward Investment

We highlighted that Renfrewshire isn't visible as an inward investment location and the Council's relationships with inward investment influencers and intermediaries (SDI, NMIS, Universities, some companies etc.) aren't robust enough to either advocate or position Renfrewshire for inward investment. The Renfrewshire Economic Strategy highlights:

"Challenge 4 - To raise Renfrewshire's profile nationally and internationally as a natural location for inward and established business investment, for attracting talent and as a place to visit.

"The flagship investments bringing NMIS and MMIC to the developing, internationally focused AMIDS, are a strong confirmation of Renfrewshire's credentials for further inward investors."

"Challenge 8 - To make available land for business expansion, new business formation and inward investment."

We consider there to be five issues here in terms of the Council's structure and capacity to support and attract inward investment:

- Inward investment enquiries will demand cross Council involvement and responses from Leader of the Council and Chief Executive, through to senior managers/ directors involved with land and buildings, financial support or incentives, education and skills etc. A clear-cut structure is required that identifies lead officer(s) – see below – and how and when others across the Council need to be involved
- The Economic Leadership Panel might play a more proactive role in advocating the investment opportunities for the area – thus broadening its relationships with key players elsewhere in the local economy and amongst stakeholders
- Secondly, since SDI and other influencers and intermediaries will generate enquiries - and these will come from some local businesses too, looking to invest locally – there is an absolute need to create, sustain and manage positive relationships between the Council and e.g. SDI, AMIDS, Universities and local companies. The solution would be for a dedicated officer or team managing all inward investment enquiries and the relationship with these key influencers. Where others in the Council need to be mobilised to help respond to enquiries (e.g. property, employability, regeneration), then corporate protocols may be needed to establish clear lines of communication about who is doing what in response to enquiries. We highlight the relationship management issue in more detail below

²⁶ See also Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development, Indicators Framework Report 2020-21

²⁷ We acknowledge GDPR issues exist with sharing of database information across the Council; asking business operators about their willingness to share (non-sensitive) information may support subsequent marketing and communications to them

- Marketing and product portfolio – there is also a need for concrete marketing collateral to support the handling of enquiries and this may vary, or be required to be finessed to respond to either the source of enquiries i.e. from SDI, City Deal or through AMIDS or a University, or the type of enquiry (e.g. from a local company, manufacturer etc.) This activity needs to be resourced, well planned, coordinated and considered from every angle i.e. sectoral knowledge, case studies, available research, ambassadors for the area available to present/ talk about local business opportunities effectively to potential investors – in effect, a whole programme ready to go when an enquiry is received
- More sites need to be identified and developed to accommodate inward investment enquiries, officers suggesting that the shortage of sites is a constraint

5.7 Relationship Management - Working with Key Influencers, Stakeholders and Businesses

We've addressed the absence of structured relationships between Council Economic and Business units with major influencers and stakeholders at one level and with business operators working across Renfrewshire at another, and why this is important²⁸.

This fundamental gap in the Council's economic and business portfolio means that new investment, inward investment, supply chain, economic and business research and understanding of trends and collaborative working are all reduced.

The outcomes are the erosion of the Council's role to influence or be seen as a major player in the economy and the reduced ability to deliver to the ambitions and targets of the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy.

We consider that there are a number of implications and interventions for addressing this shortcoming, which have been broadly agreed with senior officers:

- Appropriate officers need to be given the responsibility to know the business operators at key locations - Hillington, Inchinnan, Westway Park, Glasgow Airport Investment Area, Braehead. This responsibility includes meeting and knowing key owners and managers within the businesses and, where necessary (e.g. where risks or investment opportunities arise) introduce senior staff or even the Leader of the Council to the operators
- Appropriate senior officers need to be given the account management responsibility to work with key stakeholders – specifically NMIS, MMIC, UWS -and businesses, to influence them in terms of their priorities, assess their achievements and alignment with the Economic Strategy and identify whether and how the Council may support them further etc. We don't underestimate the philosophical and procedural changes required within the team to deliver on account management, but the requirement is great
- The generic characteristics of account management are found at Appendix 4, for the roles identified above, along with generic KPIs
- One senior Manager needs to take on the role within the Council to coordinate and lead these account management activities (above) and external communications. This would allow sharing of intelligence, identification of growth opportunities, everyone to contribute to the inward investment proposition for the Council area and maximise the Council's and these stakeholders' knowledge and economic impact. This person will require key industry and influencing skills and will be a diplomat. They need to have credibility to operate across these agencies and sectors. Note also that delivery across these stakeholders and businesses needs many others in the Council and business development team to be directed and operate an account management role as an integral part of their duties

²⁸ We also suggested that delivery of Business Gateway and Employability services do engage and communicate with their client groups

- A separate Tourism Account Manager is proposed²⁹ (as detailed above and at Appendix 5), with indicative KPIs
- An up-to-date and good database of businesses and their owners and managers has to be developed and kept up to date to support officers to do their account management job and to allow regular research into the businesses, their employment, growth or changes and to support evidence-based decision making and to ensure targeted communication and marketing to them
- Inclusive Economic Growth necessitates a broader range of metrics based on economic, social and environmental factors. This is an area that needs to be addressed and will demand a readjustment to research methodologies to be able to report accurately on KPIs that meet the Economic Strategy targets
- Regular and consistent communications are required to be developed and delivered for businesses and stakeholders across the area, partly to demonstrate the Council's role, its "finger on the pulse" of the local economy and to regularly promote initiatives, workshops etc. being delivered by the Council and its partners. An online newsletter or similar would be appropriate
- We have written generic account management tasks (Appendix 4) to emphasise the adaptation of the responsibilities of existing job holders.

²⁹ This could be a two-year external contract, but requiring internal reporting to the senior manager

Indicative key stakeholders and partners are listed below:

Indicative Key Stakeholders and Partners	
Scottish Development International	Scottish Enterprise
Glasgow City region and City Deal	Skills Development Scotland (SDS)
Scotland Food & Drink	National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS)
Glasgow Airport	Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre (MMIC)
University of the West of Scotland	Paisley First Business Improvement District
West College Scotland	Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce
OneRen	

Indicative tourism related stakeholders and partners (for the Tourism Account Manager	
Tourism	Glasgow Life
VisitScotland /EventScotland	Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions
Scottish Tourism Alliance	OneRen
Scottish Hospitality Group	Skills Development Scotland
Green Tourism	Universities
Historic Environment Scotland	

6. Conclusions, Recommendations and Action Plan

A lot of economic and business services are working well, but some structural barriers reduce the capacity to maximise beneficial impact on the local economy and promote the role of the Council.

Crucially, staff need to be given specific responsibilities to be proactive, rather than largely as now, being reactive. The absence of intelligence about who the businesses are, who leads and manages them, who to talk to etc. is indicative of limited resource and a reactive approach to business development. It also means that new opportunities aren't being identified; Renfrewshire isn't presenting a coherent inward investment proposition and consequently the Council itself needs to reassert itself to bring leadership and authority to sector and company growth.

Internal requirements from adopting this proactive approach comprise changes in the roles of several staff; clear reporting lines; clear, defined management objectives; regular appraisal on performance etc. all within Economy and Regeneration. Closer working relationships are also needed to share e.g. the relationships with external influencers and agencies held by other units of the Chief Executive's Department. Without underestimating the complexity of this change management within Economy and Development, the results will be the transition from a passive role to bring reassurance to key stakeholders and an enhancement not only of the Council's role but of the beneficial impacts on the business community.

6.1 Recommendations

Our conclusions and recommendations are that Renfrewshire Council should seek to amplify their economic and business growth services and impact by implementing a number of changes – which we detail below:

1. To adopt a **relationship management or account management** philosophy and approach within the service to enable closer working with stakeholders, influencers, partners and rank and file businesses across the economy, at the **direction of a lead, senior manager** – who might be an existing or new appointment. Alongside this change in working practices, a **coaching and training plan** is required to help staff achieve what will be expected of them through this proactive account management approach
2. Specifically for tourism, a **Tourism Account Manager should be appointed** with the responsibility to work with stakeholders in the sector and encourage collaboration, product development and joint marketing. A sector specific **action plans for the creative and cultural sector**³⁰ would complement that currently being prepared for tourism
3. Develop an **Action Plan for the delivery of green and sustainable interventions** and actions to encourage businesses to adopt green and sustainable targets that contribute to delivering net zero emissions
4. Develop a planning and reporting structure that will allow for Renfrewshire to position itself for **inward investment** and be able to respond to enquiries and opportunities – this would include the development of an inward investment profile (including marketing collateral) and product portfolio (cataloguing sites, skills and other needs of inward investors) , working with intermediaries and influencers (through the recommended account management system) and identify the team of people who need to be involved (including touch points from Leader and Chief Executive to key staff) together with the identification and preparation of sites to accommodate new investment
5. Potentially the role of the **Economic Leadership Panel** should be expanded to help gather intelligence and be part of the advocacy of the area for new and inward investment. This might necessitate strengthening the membership to include key partners not on the Panel at the moment
6. Prepare a **communications plan** for communicating with the business community; this might include an **annual Economic Conference**, facilitated for debate and discussion with the business community to support communication
7. Undertake the research to **map local supply chains** and identify opportunities for local businesses
8. Evaluate the benefits or otherwise of keeping the **Business Gateway service inhouse or contracting out** and review **Business Gateway processes** to see whether time and resource can be released
9. Research, plan and adjust research methodologies to generate a **broader range of metrics based on economic, social and environmental factors** to report accurately on KPIs that meet the Economic Strategy targets. Equally, plan for and develop a **database of businesses** across the area (identifying their owners, managers, employment, functions etc.) in order to support market research, support account managers and generate effective communications with them

6.2 Outcomes

The outcomes from implementation of the recommendations in this report are, in our view, clear cut:

- Reposition and enhance the Council role in sectoral and business growth and development
- Align existing resources and partners to deliver to sector growth ambitions, as defined by the 2020-30 Economic Strategy
- Stimulate and manage collaboration and enhanced and regular communication with strategic partners and the business community

³⁰ Especially focusing on the commercial sector

- Identify how to further stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship
- Identify what the inward investment portfolio, including property assets, needs to be to enhance Renfrewshire’s positioning and attract new investment
- Map and develop local supply chains and align with Renfrewshire’s businesses

6.3 Way Forward - Implementation

Some key decisions are required around resources, accountabilities, job descriptions and performance management:

1. Agreement of the overall report and its recommendations
2. Determine that there is there is budget for 1 new account manager for Tourism
3. One senior manager takes on the role of managing the account management responsibilities of staff whose job descriptions are expanded to fulfil this role
4. Agreement and commitment to introduce an account management approach and philosophy into the staff team, with allocation of responsibilities, reporting lines and accountabilities
5. Identification of needs and delivery to a coaching and training plan to upskill staff to fulfil these roles
6. Preparation and delivery of a communication plan to deliver to the ambitions of the report
7. Agreement of a clear direction for the green/ sustainability and creative industries tasks
8. Agreement and delivery of the preparation of a database of companies and changed research methodology to develop metrics associated with the economy, social factors and the environment

6.4 Risk Analysis

The fundamental question is what happens if Renfrewshire Council doesn’t adopt the recommendations from EKOS and Business Pointer’s work?

We suggested above that the actions that emerge from the analysis are a menu of sorts, from which the Council can select and prioritise, depending on resources and organisational solutions. However they also provide a coherent range of interventions and structural solutions designed to address and deliver more effectively to the Economic Strategy targets.

Failure to implement the recommendations will in our view result:

- In the Council’s role continuing as is and the Council not being seen, or actually being a major influencer in business development and inward investment
- Tourism, creative industries and the green agenda will considerably under perform
- Relationships with key influencers and intermediaries will remain “neutral”, suggesting that the Council will find it harder to influence their priorities and ensure their alignment with the Economic Strategy targets
- Local investment and performance by Renfrewshire businesses will occur either without the Council knowing, or being able to help
- Communications with the business community and understanding who they are will be weakened, suggesting also that marketing initiatives and support to them in the future will be harder.

Business Pointer, April 2023

Appendix 1

Interviewees

Name	Organisation	Position
Alasdair Morrison	Renfrewshire Council	Head of Economy & Development
George Hunter	Renfrewshire Council	Chief Economic & Regeneration Officer
Ruth Cooper	Renfrewshire Council	Economic Development Manager
Barbara Walker	Renfrewshire Council	Programme Director City Deal and Infrastructure
Colette Saez	Renfrewshire Council	Assistant Economic Development Manager Business Development
Andrew McKean	Renfrewshire Council	Tourism Officer
Robert Kinniburgh	Renfrewshire Council	Business Growth Advisor
Cindy Robb	Renfrewshire Council	Creative Industries
Marie Milne	Renfrewshire Council	Business Gateway Administrator
Joanna Quinn	Renfrewshire Council	Marketing Manager
Dr Victoria Hollows	One Ren	Chief Executive
Sylvia Smith	One Ren	Business Development
Michael Dunn	EKOS	Consultant
Chris Kelly	EKOS	Director
John Kelly	EKOS	Consultant
Michael Colhoun	Discover Scotland Tours	MD
Bob Grant	Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce	CEO
Jill Carrino	Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce	Deputy CEO
Ross Nimmo	Glasgow Airport	Head of Planning and Development
Fiona Gallagher	Mar Hall	Head of Sales
Helen Livingston	Branding Boutique	Director
Paul Fraser	Ingliston Country Club	Owner
Linda Barrett	Paisley Abbey	Manager
Paul Kilby	Glasgow City Region - City Deal	Regional Partnership Manager
Andrew Robertson	Glasgow City Region - City Deal	Intelligence Hub Manager
Scott McLean	Green Business/Zero Waste Scotland	MD
Gordon Smith	VisitScotland	Regional Director Regional Leadership & Development
Janie Neumann	VisitScotland	Sustainability Manager
Paul McCafferty	Scottish Enterprise	Tourism
Aileen Lamb	Scottish Enterprise	Programme & Strategy Manager
Anna Young	Glasgow Life	Senior Tourism Manager
Grant Edmundson	Frasers Property – Hillington Park	Commercial Director
Jonny Mone	UWS	Head of Business Innovation
Sandro Carnicelli	UWS	Senior Lecturer & Head of Events & Tourism Unit

Appendix 2

EKOS Priority Growth Opportunities for Renfrewshire

The key growth sector opportunities are aligned to the following thematic areas:

- Current sectoral strengths that require a stronger “local” focus:
 - (Advanced) manufacturing, engineering, life science/medical.
- Current “untapped” sectors where Renfrewshire Council and partners could do more to unlock the growth opportunity:
 - Development of local culture/ creative offering.
 - Further development of tourism/ hospitality offering.
- Innovation and entrepreneurship:
 - Cross sector - R&D intensive and with scale-up potential, with HE/FE leading.
- Land, property, and incubation:
 - Development of the land and property assets with a focus on innovation and enterprise and the role of incubators.
- Map and develop local supply chains:
 - Develop new support products.

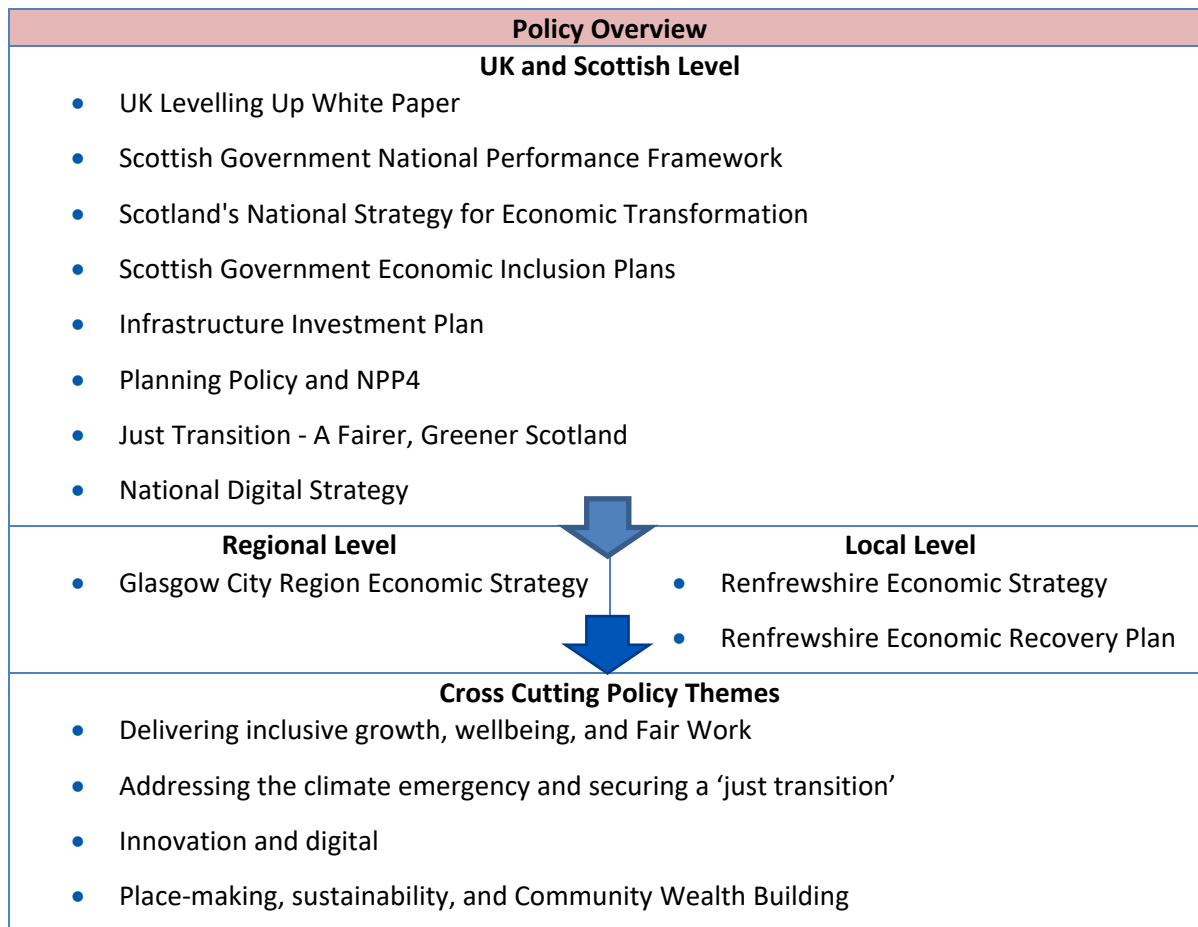
Inward investment

While more consideration of the level of resources which would be required, the following are highlighted as potential services:

- provision of a one-stop shop for anyone seeking to invest in Renfrewshire (start-up/growth/inward investor):
 - project scale requires to be defined with supporting triage service
 - named contact to act as front face of project and which will manage marketing
 - marketing and promotion
 - develop networks with public and private sector intermediaries

Appendix 3

EKOS Summary of the Policy Context



Appendix 4

Generic Account Management Roles and Responsibilities for Business Development Staff

Introduction

This is a generic account management statement of roles and responsibilities for business Development staff within Renfrewshire Council. The aim is to introduce an account management philosophy and approach to enhance understanding of and communication with stakeholders, influencers, partners and individual businesses.

Account Management

Account management is a structured approach to managing and nurturing relationships with players in the Renfrewshire economy, including major businesses, stakeholders and influencers³¹.

Within Renfrewshire Council, the role is to identify key business players, stakeholders and influencers and develop strong relationships with them – to agree on joint priorities, collaborative opportunities and ways of working – to support the achievement of the Councils' Economic Strategy objectives and targets. Within the Council, a senior manager will have responsibility for coordinating the efforts of staff and ensuring that a regular reporting mechanism is implemented to allow teams to know what is going on and where opportunities might be supported by Council intervention.

The account management's role will be to feed information back to departments, senior staff and members while mobilising and managing Council support to achieve the joint objectives and planned outputs with individual businesses, partners and stakeholders.

Account managers must learn about and be knowledgeable about the key businesses, stakeholders and influencers and what drives them. They must be customer focused to build trust and be strong communicators to manage their external relationships properly. They must also communicate with and manage others internally who contribute to account management objectives.

Account Manager Overview

- Operate as the lead point of contact within the Council for allocated stakeholders or businesses
- Operate as the lead point of contact for businesses that may operate from an allocated business location or industrial estate (e.g. Inchinnan)
- Get to know and create strong, long-term, trusting relationships with these organisations and their senior managers and board members
- Address the business issues and opportunities each business or stakeholders has and identify whether and how the Council and its partners might be able to support them
- Keep senior management advised and informed of contacts, opportunities, risks etc. within the portfolio of account managed companies or influencers
- Liaise with other cross-functional internal Council teams to ensure business and stakeholder needs or queries are met
- Experienced facilitator who can engage and lead complex groups

Skills

³¹ In the commercial sector the role is a dual one - helping customers in their relationship with the account manager's business, while also maximising the value of sales and services to them and making sure to retain them as customers

Individuals operating an account management system with the Council will be educated to degree standard and/ or have industry or public sector experience at an operational level – advising and supporting businesses.

They must be familiar or able to adapt and use account management software (CRM), be able to communicate with business clients and be able to manage diverse people and teams internally, to generate their commitment to contribute to the external needs of businesses.

They will be able to plan ahead, coordinating internal inputs and ensuring systematic reporting to measure the effectiveness of the Council's support/ intervention and contribution to Economic Strategy objectives and targets.

They will also have the proven ability to juggle multiple account management projects at a time, while maintaining sharp attention to detail

They will be a self-starter and have the capability to initiate new business opportunities for the Renfrewshire economy and persuade internal and external clients of their contribution to help make them happen.

Account Management Responsibilities and Tasks

1. Knowledgeable about the working of the public sector and the role of Councils in economic development, business growth and regeneration
2. An understanding of Scotland's and Renfrewshire's economy and associated strategies and policies
3. Accept allocated businesses or key influencers/ partners to work with, or areas (e.g. Inchinnan) to work within and identify and communicate with businesses within these areas
4. Be the lead contact within the Council and coordinate communications with identified businesses, getting to know the business, their senior managers/ owners and the sector/business they operate in
5. Work with other Council staff (and staff amongst partners) who can assist meeting the client managed business needs and requirements
6. Be the ambassador for the Council with client account managed businesses

Indicative Key Performance Indicators for Generic Account Management Responsibilities

- Participate in training provided to support officers fulfil the account management approach to business development
- Identify the businesses, senior managers or owners, sector they operate in, value etc. to have profile that can be briefed to colleagues if necessary (when other might be able to assist companies)
- With own allocated businesses, introduce self and outline role and services of the Council, identify positioning of business re profitability, skills, recruitment etc.
- Identify opportunities for business growth, barriers and whether Council or other stakeholders or partners can support businesses

Appendix 5

Person Specification for Tourism Account Manager

Introduction

Account Management is the role of communicating and representing those working in the tourism sector to answer questions, address concerns and help them work together to promote the destination (for tourism) and their businesses and organisations. It might include internal Council communications and engagement where others inside the Council are best placed to respond to industry needs.

Daily tasks of an Account Manager include overseeing routine issues as well as handling more complicated ones on behalf of their client group(s). A good Account Manager must be customer focused to build trust with customers. They must be a strong communicator to manage their external relationships properly. An efficient Account Manager must also be knowledgeable about operators' businesses, sectoral players and characteristics, markets and customer demands or behaviours that impact tourism performance.

Account Manager Overview

- Operating as the lead point of contact within the Council for any and all matters specific to tourism business development
- Create strong, long-term, trusting relationships with tourism operators, key business executives and stakeholders in both sectors
-
- Build and maintain strong, long-lasting customer relationships
- Liaise with cross-functional internal Council teams to ensure that sector and business needs or queries are met
- Develop trusted advisor relationships with key accounts, customer stakeholders and executive sponsors
- Experienced facilitator who can engage and lead complex groups

Skills

The individual will be educated to degree standard and/ or have industry experience; they may be familiar with account management software (CRM), have a flair for client communication and understand consumer behavior. They will be able to plan ahead, to fit with (say) the awards, funding application timescales, exhibitions, events and conference calendars. They will have systematic reporting capabilities, both internally to Council management and externally to industry groups or representatives. They will also have the proven ability to juggle multiple account management projects at a time, while maintaining sharp attention to detail.

They will be a self-starter and have the capability to initiate new business opportunities for client businesses in tourism to help individual businesses, groups of operators and the destination.

Responsibilities and Tasks

1. Experienced and knowledgeable about the tourism sector and its reach, or the ability to absorb information and operate within the sector
2. Understanding of or quick to assimilate industry characteristics in the tourism industry (e.g. seasonal business models, structures of the sectors, consumer decision making and all other such matters as impact individual business performance and the success of the destination) focusing particularly on commercial operators and businesses
3. A thorough knowledge of Scotland's tourism strategy
4. Has a clear understanding of the challenges facing the tourism sector in terms of margins, skills, recruitment and retention, and have the ability to work with the internal Skills Development Team and the wider

stakeholder groups in education and industry to execute plans which will position Renfrewshire Council well with industry and employers

5. Be visible and available to local businesses – is proactive, well planned, has demonstrable experience in product innovation for businesses and able to develop groups of operators to work together
6. Experienced networker – ability to operate at the highest level in Tourism and Hospitality including with e.g. Scottish Government, VisitScotland to represent Renfrewshire
7. Has a clear understanding of Destination Management
8. Is a strong and effective communicator who can work seamlessly across the Council to engage, inform and effect change – particularly with OneRen/ Marketing/ Elected Members
9. Will lead, work with partners and support others to implement support for Green/ Sustainable activities in the area – positioning Renfrewshire as a green destination
10. Will engage with industry awards – VisitScotland/ Thistle Awards/ CIS/ HIT Scotland/ Sustainability Awards to enhance the reputation of Renfrewshire

Indicative Key Performance Indicators for the Tourism Account Manager

- **Within 6 months**

- Have Industry Group formed and operational, with effective reporting into/out of Council
- Have full and comprehensive dataset of all operating companies developed within Renfrewshire (These should be profiled, their activity, owners/ managers, markets, and an understanding of what they bring to the area in terms of visitor numbers, spend, employment, supply chain requirements, green credentials, training etc.)
- Initiate a programme of familiarisation visits for the tourism and hospitality sector to get to know and be engaged with Paisley Museum and Art Gallery, so operators can tie in their marketing with the new facilities
- Work with OneRen and Council Marketing on marketing collaboration to encourage tourism and hospitality sector to work with Museum and Art Gallery and Town Hall
- Set up or be part of the programme VisitScotland familiarisation visits – 1 for UK and 1 International, working in partnership with Industry Group – to be delivered late 2023/early 24
- Student placement/support programme from UWE to Tourism Industry
- Monthly internal reporting to the business development team

- **Within One Year**

- Have a demonstrable portfolio of tourism and hospitality operators with whom the Council is working with on business development
- Collaborative tourism operators' marketing initiatives to promote the destination
- Forward programme of familiarisation visits organised
- Press and publicity opportunities realised with Council Marketing