

Minute of Meeting Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 29 August 2023	10:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Alison Ann-Dowling, Councillor Stephen Burns, Councillor Michelle Campbell, Councillor Graeme Clark, Councillor Andy Doig, Councillor Neill Graham, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Colin McCulloch, Councillor Jamie McGuire, Councillor Marie McGurk, Councillor Iain McMillan, Councillor John McNaughtan, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor Andy Steel

Chair

Councillor Steel, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

A Morrison, Head of Economy & Development, B Walker, Programme Director (City Deal & Infrastructure), R Cooper, Economic Development Manager, E Shearer, Senior Manager for Regeneration and Place, M Moran, Assistant Economic Development Manager (Funding, Contracts & Commercial Development) and D Christie, Senior Communications Officer (all Chief Executive's); J Whitehead, J Skinner and J McLean, all End User Technicians, V Howie, Finance Business Partner, J Lochans, Programme Manager, R Devine and C MacDonald, both Senior Committee Services Officers, D Cunningham, Committee Services & Licensing Officer and E Graham and R McCallum, both Licensing & Committee Assistants (all Finance & Resources).

Webcasting of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Policy Board would be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site.

Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

Councillor Nicolson declared an interest in agenda Item 2 - Cultural Infrastructure Projects – Update for the reason he was a Director of Paisley Museum Reimagined.

Councillor N Graham indicated that he had a connection to agenda item 4 - Historic Graveyards - Tourism Update as he was a volunteer with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. However, he indicated that he had applied the objective test and did not consider he had an interest to declare and intimated that it was his intention to remain in the meeting and to take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Clark indicated that he had a connection to agenda item 7 - Invest in Renfrewshire: Start - Up Street Update as a member of his family, his son, was the Chief Executive of Active Communities in Johnstone. However, he indicated that he had applied the objective test and did not consider he had an interest to declare and intimated that it was his intention to remain in the meeting and to take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

1 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report

There was submitted a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Resources for the period 1 April to 23 June 2023.

The report stated that the projected outturn as at 31 March 2024 for those services reporting to the Economy & Regeneration Policy Board was an underspend position of £0.002 million. The projected capital outturn for projects reporting to this Policy Board as at 31 March 2024 was a breakeven position against the revised budget for the year. Tables 1 and 2 within the report summarised the position and further analysis was provided in appendices to the report. The report also advised there had been net revenue budget adjustments totalling £0.007 million processed since consideration of the previous report, which related to realignment of employee cost budgets and capital budget changes of £4.073 million reflecting budget reprofiles for 2022/23 to 2023/24 which were detailed in the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the projected Revenue outturn position, detailed in Table 1 of the report, be noted;

(b) That the projected Capital outturn position, detailed in Table 2 of the report, be noted; and

(c) That the budget adjustments, detailed in sections 4 and 6 of the report, be noted.

There was submitted a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Resources for the period 1 April to 23 June 2023.

2 Cultural Infrastructure Programme Update

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the progress of the Council's Cultural Infrastructure Programme, being delivered on behalf of the Council by the City Deal & Infrastructure Team, with project management expertise from the Council's Property Services team, and in the case of the Paisley Museum Project, by OneRen.

The report indicated that the Programme investment in Paisley Town Centre would use the area's internationally significant cultural and heritage story to transform our future for visitors and events in Scotland. In addition, it was anticipated that the programme of works would result in increased footfall to the town centre, create new homes for top class cultural events, while preserving the heritage of the town. the Renfrewshire economy and Paisley Town Centre.

The report provided updates in terms of the progress of specific projects contained within the Cultural Infrastructure Programme. As indicated in previous reports, the Programme had experienced significant impact from global events, including the pandemic and war in Ukraine, resulting in economic challenges, particularly noticed in the construction industry. The report intimated that completion of projects within the Programme was central to the recovery and inclusive growth of the Renfrewshire economy and Paisley Town Centre. The significant scale of the construction phase, coupled with the unprecedented challenges faced across the wider construction sector over the last few years had meant there had been an inevitable shift in the construction completion dates for each venue in contrast to that planned at the outset of the programme. In this connection, a significant milestone had been achieved with the completion of the main works construction at Paisley Town Hall. This project was the first to progress to a carefully planned fit-out period with the remainder of the projects following in a phased approach to ensure that resources internally at both the Council and OneRen, as well as specialist contractors, could deliver a high quality and efficient opening programme. This approach allowed each venue to be launched in its own right and to contribute both individually and collectively to maximise the impact on Renfrewshire's cultural, events and heritage opportunities. The other projects in the Programme continued to move at pace and it was highlighted that it was anticipated that Paisley Learning & Cultural Hub would open later in 2023 with the Arts Centre following thereafter.

It was proposed and agreed that arrangements be made to provide clarification to members of this Policy Board in respect of the current status of the project at County Square, Paisley, previously included within the Programme.

DECIDED:

(a) That the progress and current stage of construction of the projects, together with the financial implications, outlined in the report, be noted; and

(b) That arrangements be made to provide clarification to members of this Policy Board in respect of the current status of the project at County Square, Paisley, previously included within the Programme.

3 **Village Heritage Grant Scheme - Update**

Under reference to item 2 of the Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 3 March 2022 there was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to progress achieved in respect of the creation of a £0.250 million conservation and heritage grants scheme for property owners in and around the centres of Renfrewshire's villages.

The report acknowledged that the repair and maintenance of privately owned historic properties, to an appropriate conservation standard, helped preserve the historic environment and maintain villages as sustainable, thriving places and proposed the establishment of two complementary grant schemes; Grants for Heritage Maintenance Plans and Grants for Heritage Repairs, accessible from Autumn 2023, across the 11 Renfrewshire villages which previously benefited from the Villages Investment Fund. The report indicated that the application process for both schemes would follow a similar model to the online process successfully established for the Retail Improvement Scheme in Renfrewshire, with applications scored on a range of criteria which assessed impact, quality and deliverability.

DECIDED:

(a) That the proposal for the creation of a Village Heritage Grant Scheme, utilising existing identified budgets, through two complementary schemes; Grants for Heritage Maintenance Plans and Grants for Heritage Repairs, be approved; and

(b) That the Head of Economy & Development be authorised to refine the parameters of the grant scheme and produce the relevant guidance and application pack and make it available via the Council's website.

4 **Historic Graveyards - Tourism Update**

Under reference to item 9 of the Minute of the meeting of the Council held on 28 April 2022, there was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to progress achieved in respect of the review of Renfrewshire's historic graveyards and their future tourism potential.

The report indicated that although history, heritage, and culture were key aspects of Renfrewshire's tourism proposition, historic graveyards had not specifically been promoted. The report also provided an update on work undertaken by officers in response to the Council decision and detailed a range of future actions.

DECIDED: That the work undertaken and progress to date be noted and that the intention to submit a further report to a future meeting of this Policy Board also be noted.

5 **Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study Final Report.

The report referred to the need previously identified to engage specialist advice as to which sectors Renfrewshire should be targeting to support business growth and secure inward investment. The report entitled Analysis of Renfrewshire's Business Growth Sectors which had been considered at the meeting of this Policy Board held on 1 November 2022, was referenced as it outlined the results of the work undertaken by EKOS who had been commissioned by the Council. Subsequently Business Pointer had been appointed to identify 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 within the Council's Economic Strategy. 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. A copy of the Renfrewshire Growth Sector Study Final Report produced by Business Pointer was appended to the report and highlighted what was currently working well within the Council, key areas for improvement, provided conclusions and made recommendations. Following review by officers a number of actions, detailed within the report, were proposed for implementation to capitalise on the area's economic and business development opportunities.

DECIDED: That the content of the report and the actions proposed in respect of recommendations proposed in the Growth Sector Study be noted.

6 **Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park – Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan and Castle Semple Vision Document**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (STIDP), the consultation exercise undertaken to support the Plan, together with progress on the development of a future Castle Semple Vision document.

The STIDP, a copy of which was attached as Appendix 1 of the report, had been developed through detailed consultation along with desk-based analysis and site visits to Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks. Outcomes from the consultation undertaken were detailed within Appendix 2 of the report and had informed the priorities contained in the Plan.

The Plan set out a number of short to medium term projects to enhance infrastructure and relieve visitor pressure points at Castle Semple and Muirshiel Country Parks and also identified high-level requirements for strategic tourism infrastructure; considered the future role of Castle Semple/Muirshiel Country Parks in the wider context of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and the emerging Renfrewshire Tourism Action Plan; and provided a catalyst for attracting inward investment to implement both short to medium term projects and those in the longer-term. The report stated that to support progress and delivery of the STIDP actions, existing regeneration budgets would be utilised to conduct feasibility studies and detailed design studies to further develop several of the short-term priorities highlighted within the Plan. If deemed feasible,

consideration would be given to allocating capital funding to deliver on the priorities. Delivery would be progressed in partnership with the local community and key stakeholders and it was highlighted that it was intended to produce a finalised draft of the long-term Castle Semple Vision document prior to the next meeting of the Clyde Muirshiel Liaison Group.

Councillor Andy Doig moved, in addition to the recommendations detailed within the report, that it be agreed to include, where possible, in the STIPD measures, which would refresh and rejuvenate key economic and commercial links between CMRP/Castle Semple and the villages of Lochwinnoch, Howwood, and Kilbarchan, as local service centres with small and medium sized enterprises, to the benefit of both. This was accepted by the Convener and agreed unanimously.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (STIDP) be approved as a basis for further development and delivery of proposals, including the preparation of bids for major capital funding streams;

(b) That the Head of Economy and Development be authorised to conduct a series of feasibility studies to support the next stages of development for the STIDP;

(c) That it be agreed to include, where possible, in the STIPD measures, which would refresh and rejuvenate key economic and commercial links between Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park/Castle Semple and the villages of Lochwinnoch, Howwood, and Kilbarchan, as local service centres with small and medium sized enterprises, to the benefit of both; and.

(d) That the intention to produce a long-term Castle Semple Vision be noted.

7 **Invest in Renfrewshire: Start-Up Street Update**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the Start-Up Street initiatives in Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew.

The report stated that the Start-Up Street project was an economic development initiative which aimed to help grow the local economy by supporting start-up businesses looking to make their first step into commercial premises. The initiative offered new and growing businesses low-cost, high-quality workspace and wrap-around support to nurture and develop early-stage business. Incubation spaces were offered for a maximum of two years to small or early-stage businesses with a staged rental model which increased over the two-year period and at the end of the contract period the business would be paying the full rental value and could then be supported to move to an alternative commercial space in the Renfrewshire area. The Start-Up Street model had been developed to address as many local requirements as possible and each project aimed to provide a high degree of added value, such as utilising long term vacant premises, supporting the local regeneration of the area, supporting under-represented groups and identifying where the greatest impacts could be made. An overview and progress updates were provided in respect of the Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew Start-Up Street developments.

DECIDED: That the overview and progress of the Start-Up Street developments, which were at 100% occupancy and provided 26 supported incubation spaces and 7 hot-desking spaces to local businesses, be noted.

8 **Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Update 2023/24**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the Start-Up Street initiatives in Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew.

The report stated that the Start-Up Street project was an economic development initiative which aimed to help grow the local economy by supporting start-up businesses looking to make their first step into commercial premises. The initiative offered new and growing businesses low-cost, high-quality workspace and wrap-around support to nurture and develop early-stage business. Incubation spaces were offered for a maximum of two years to small or early-stage businesses with a staged rental model which increased over the two-year period and at the end of the contract period the business would be paying the full rental value and could then be supported to move to an alternative commercial space in the Renfrewshire area. The Start-Up Street model had been developed to address as many local requirements as possible and each project aimed to provide a high degree of added value, such as utilising long term vacant premises, supporting the local regeneration of the area, supporting under-represented groups and identifying where the greatest impacts could be made. An overview and progress updates were provided in respect of the Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew Start-Up Street developments.

DECIDED: That the overview and progress of the Start-Up Street developments, which were at 100% occupancy and provided 26 supported incubation spaces and 7 hot-desking spaces to local businesses, be noted.

9 **No-One Left Behind: Employability Award**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to recent funding allocations from the Scottish Government for employment support in Renfrewshire for 2023/24 and associated proposed activities.

The report advised that the Scottish Government and CoSLA had signed a 'No-One Left Behind' (NOLB) Employability Partnership Agreement during December 2018 where both agreed to a set of core principles to support the collaboration and collective leadership to shape employability services nationally, whilst designing and delivering support locally. Employability was deemed to play an essential role in delivering both Scottish and local government aims of tackling poverty, promoting inclusion and social justice and creating a fair and prosperous Scotland and was a key component of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET), as it contributed to delivery of the vision for a strong economy where good, secure and well-paid jobs and growing businesses achieved a significant reduction in poverty and, in particular, child poverty.

Collectively, the Scottish Government and local government aimed to build an employability system that tackled inequalities in Scotland's labour market by creating a more responsive, joined up and aligned employability system that met the needs of employers and the local labour market and helped people of all ages achieve their

potential. The No-One Left Behind initiative promoted a strengthened partnership approach where Scottish and local government worked together with public, private and third sector organisations to identify local needs and deliver a mixed economy of provision. The core principles of the initiative were outlined within the report and it was highlighted that local authorities would act as lead accountable bodies for funding, with funding being used by Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) to design and deliver services that met the needs of people and labour markets in their local area. The report advised that £2.1 million of grant funding and £0.371 million of General Revenue Grant support had been awarded, in June 2023, under the banner of No-One Left Behind locally which Renfrewshire Council was accountable for and which would be directed and managed through the Renfrewshire Local Employability Partnership. A summary document, entitled Employability Investment Plan 2023/24, providing an overview of the Local Employability Partnership approach for employability services for the next year was attached as an appendix to the report.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the acceptance of £2.1 million of Scottish Government grant funding for 2023/24 under the banner of No- One Left Behind and the additional award of £0.371 million of employability funding through the General Revenue Grant be noted;
- (b) That the ongoing focus and role for the Local Employability Partnership, as highlighted in section 4 of the report, be noted; and
- (c) That the summary document, entitled Employability Investment Plan 2023/24, attached as an appendix to the report, and providing an overview of the Local Employability Partnership approach for employability services for the next year be noted.