

To: Communities and Housing Policy Board

On: 21 May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Community Learning and Development - Six Monthly Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 Renfrewshire's Community Learning and Development Service delivers a broad range of universal and targeted services across the area as well as supporting the growth of community capacity in Renfrewshire. Major initiatives led by the service include youth services, Street Stuff, Team up to Clean Up and a range of targeted learning opportunities for adults to access further education, training or employment. This work links to Council priorities including improving outcomes for children and young people, tackling poverty, becoming a net zero authority and strengthening communities.
- 1.2 One of the ways the service evidences its important role in the community is through the delivery of Renfrewshire's Community Learning and Development Strategy 2021-2024, which was approved by the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board in August 2021. Annual updates on Years 1 and 2 of the strategy have been previously reported to Board with six monthly updates provided going forward.
- 1.3 This report covers the period October 2023 to March 2024, which is the first half of Year 3 of the strategy. It sets out the key achievements relating to delivery of that plan over the six month period. The report also provides elected members with an update on the recent inspection by Education Scotland, and looks ahead to planned activity over the next six months.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members:

- a) Note the achievements of the service over the last six months;
- b) Note the work underway to respond to the findings of the recent inspection;

3. Background

- 3.1 The Community Learning and Development (CLD) team delivers a range of services designed to support and nurture Renfrewshire's communities:
- Youth Services promote and encourage participation in initiatives such as Duke of Edinburgh, Young Scot and Renfrewshire Youth Voice, building young people's confidence, experience and knowledge.
 - The award-winning Street Stuff programme offers free activities to young people in evenings, weekends and over holiday periods, reducing youth antisocial behaviour.
 - Adult and Family Learning upskill individuals seeking support to read, write, use numbers, or speak English. Through ESOL classes (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and the MULTIPLY programme, service users grow and develop life skills.
 - Community Capacity supports participatory budgeting projects, the Green Spaces and Villages Investment Fund, as well as Team Up to Clean Up, building strength and resilience across the wider Renfrewshire and promoting positive behaviour change.
- 3.2 Local authorities have a statutory duty to develop and publish Community Learning and Development Plans as defined in the Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013. In Renfrewshire this requirement is currently delivered through the Renfrewshire Community Learning and Development Strategy 2021-2024 which was approved in August 2021.
- 3.3 The strategy sets out the current vision for Renfrewshire's Community Learning and Development service which is:
- “Working together to ensure our communities, people and families living in Renfrewshire have the capacity, support, resilience, and opportunities they need to survive”.*
- 3.4 The CLD Strategy is aligned to Renfrewshire's Community Plan and Council Plan and is underpinned by the shared values outlined by the Community Learning and Development Standards Council, namely:
- Self-determination.
 - Inclusion.
 - Empowerment.
 - Working collaboratively.
 - Promotion of learning as a lifelong activity.

- 3.5 An annual report has historically been produced which summarised key achievements in relation to the delivery of the strategy. In October 2023 it was agreed that 6 monthly updates would be provided going forward to ensure there was greater oversight of CLD activities across Renfrewshire. Section 4 provides an overview of progress achieved for the period October 2023 to March 2024. Section 5 of the report provides an overview of the recent progress visit undertaken in February 2024 by Education Scotland to assess progress with the implementation of the CLD strategy in Renfrewshire.

4. Service Achievements

- 4.1 As set out in the Community Learning and Development strategy, the Community service focuses its activity in three areas:
- Universal Provision – ensuring no-one is left behind, promoting, and providing opportunities for all;
 - Targeted Provision – targeting specialist resources and support towards those who need this most; this includes provision such as adult learning;
 - Community Capacity/Connected Communities – working with individuals, families, and groups to support them in shaping community aspirations and to develop, deliver and maintain services and facilities they want locally; this includes provision such as Team Up to Clean Up.
- 4.2 A summary of progress in the last six months is presented below, under each of the three focus areas.

Universal Provision

- 4.3 Youth Services undertook consultation and outreach with young people to improve youth voice in under-represented areas and findings will help develop future work in this area. Specific work on democracy took place in the run-up to elections for Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament, and there was engagement with around 3000 young people across 12 schools. The service has also supported the recruitment and training of West Partnership Ambassadors, a group of young people who will engage with the West Partnership Regional Improvement Collaborative on education. The Promise Champions Youth Voice group has consulted with other care-experienced young people and developed a programme of summer activities based on the findings from this.
- 4.4 Support for the rollout of free travel for 11–22-year-olds continues, and a process is in place to ensure that the next cohort becoming eligible are signed up. Around 87% of young people in Renfrewshire have their cards which is above the national average of 83%. 86% of those using the Young Scot Card have the free travel element enabled.
- 4.5 The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is growing in popularity with over 450 new starts this year, and 209 awards made. In March 2024 a Celebration Event was held in Paisley Town Hall to recognise the significant achievements of participants. The

number of young people who took part and are more likely to experience barriers to participation, also increased this year by 23%.

- 4.6 The 11th Positive Youth Awards took place, organised by Renfrewshire Youth Voice. Over 150 young people attended the awards ceremony.
- 4.7 There has been specific work focused on promoting gender equality and the prevention of violence against women. This has included participation in Reclaim the Night and 16 Days of Action, workshop-based learning in schools on tackling misogyny, an ongoing groupwork project to develop a social media resource intended to influence positive attitudes and reduce targeting of women and girls, and two pilots delivering group work to young men in two schools which looks at coercive behaviour and attitudes towards women and girls.
- 4.8 Training and professional development remains a focus for the team, and staff have recently undertaken training that includes 'Leading CLD', 'Supporting Adult Literacies' and 'Autism Awareness'.

Targeted Provision

- 4.9 Adult learning has had a particular focus on numeracy and on digital skills. There have been 16 Multiply courses delivered, and 15 ICT courses targeted at those with little or no digital experience. There has also been ongoing delivery of family learning activities in 3 primary schools and 12 nurseries. There continues to be good demand for English for Speakers of Other Languages courses, and several learners have taken up volunteer opportunities with CLD. Renfrewshire's Ukrainian community has been supported with learning programmes that increase language skills, reduce social isolation and support wellbeing. English language classes have been made available in Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone in partnership with the Resettlement Team. In addition, a course was co-produced with Paisley Museum that encouraged development of emotional vocabulary using art, and a conversation-based group has been established in Gallowhill focusing on the integration and wellbeing of older Ukrainian women. Two Ukrainian Displaced Persons joined the team as Invest Trainees for 26 weeks and helped with the facilitation of language groupwork.
- 4.10 A new evening group for autistic adults has been established as a partnership between CLAD and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 4.11 Work to support jobseekers has included the reintroduction of Weekly Work Clubs, based in CLD Learning Centres. These clubs provide practical support, including internet access to support job searches. After an initial trial period, the provision has been reviewed and the Work Clubs have been merged with digital classes, in recognition of the criticality of digital skills in both seeking and securing employment. A separate and discrete learning group for jobseekers with a learning disability has been established in partnership with Enable Works. This is already proving successful, and several group members have already progressed to education, volunteering or paid employment. CLAD have also worked with Invest in Renfrewshire to support trainees and provide work experience on the ESOL programme.
- 4.12 Street Stuff has been delivering activities in areas most in need including the provision of healthy food in evenings across Renfrewshire. They are also working

across a number of schools as part of the Street to School programme with a view to closing the attainment gap and improving attendance at school.

- 4.13 In addition to the Mentors in Violence Prevention work undertaken across Renfrewshire secondary schools, CLAD have also established a Young and Equally Safe in Renfrewshire pilot groupwork programme, with two groups of young men focussing on positive masculinity. This is intended to tackle attitudes and be an earlier intervention than the MVP programme.
- 4.14 Other activity related to the Promise includes the Promise Present Drive, which provided Christmas gifts to 185 care experienced people; the participation of care-experienced young people in the creation of a mural to celebrate the 50th birthday of Wallace Primary School; and the co-design of an animation on the experiences of young people within the foster care system. More art and culture-based activities are planned for 2024/25 in partnership with Future Paisley.
- 4.15 Youth Voice Development is being progressed, with links being made with community-based youth voice fora, and pupil voice development. Key areas of concern have been identified through a mixture of outreach and consultation. These themes will be taken to a forthcoming youth assembly, planned and facilitated by young people, supported by Youth Services. This will link to the delivery under UNCRC (United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child) and include young people in democratic empowerment processes.

Community Capacity

- 4.16 Team Up to Clean Up, launched in 2017, has evolved to become so much more than a litter campaign. Feedback from volunteers offers evidence of greater positive outcomes such as combatting social isolation, bringing communities together, offering purpose, improved physical health and mental wellbeing. The initiative has also encouraged and nurtured individuals to take the next steps in creating new community groups benefitting local people and neighbourhoods.
- 4.17 The Campaign has many umbrella projects with young people identified as a target audience for behaviour change; presentations are delivered in school's linking litter to climate change, wildlife and civic pride; increased bin provision offered, and wrapping bins to ensure they are more noticeable, as well as stencilling "The Sea Starts Here" at gulleys near schools. The Bin to Win project will further offer pupils incentives for binning their lunchtime litter.
- 4.18 The Environmental Taskforce has streamlined the Council's internal processes for dealing with flytipping ensuring improved communication and partnership working between Officers investigating flytipping, and Operatives removing flytipping. Flytipping continues to be an issue across the UK however the Taskforce have issued more than twice the number of fixed penalty notices than the previous year, as well as increased the number of visits to premises to ensure appropriate waste disposal and presentation.

- 4.19 The Green Spaces, Play Areas and Parks, and Villages Investment Fund has funded 132 projects since 2018. Six new community groups have taken the journey to develop new community groups to facilitate access to available funding and progress with improving their community. Local groups from all areas of Renfrewshire have created community gardens, improved nature reserves, redesigned and installed new play and fitness areas, created new multi-use sports arenas, murals and held local gala days. Improvements were implemented after wide scale consultation within the impacted community.
- 4.20 Celebrating Renfrewshire, one of the Council's participatory budgeting initiatives had another successful year in 2023/24. The priority areas for this round of funding were mental and physical wellbeing, cost of living, employability and life skills, climate change, drug and alcohol prevention, and violence-diversionary projects for young people. There were 126 applications for funding received, and 1683 young people voted to determine which received funding. Over 70 projects across Renfrewshire received a share of the funding, with awards ranging from £133 to £3500. The young people who contributed to the steering group all received their Saltire Award in recognition of their volunteering efforts.

5. Education Scotland Inspection of CLD in Renfrewshire

- 5.1 HM Inspectors visited Renfrewshire Council to undertake a community learning and development (CLD) progress visit during February 2024, as part of their schedule of visit across all 32 local authority areas in Scotland. This was a partnership focused visit during which inspectors spoke to learners and community representatives, CLD leaders, managers, staff, and volunteers, and other key stakeholders. A key focus of the visit was for HM Inspectors to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach of CLD partners to self-evaluation and planning for improvement, and to consider progress made against identified priorities in their CLD plans.
- 5.2 The inspection report was published on 16 April and can be accessed [here](#).
- 5.3 The inspection team noted that the restructuring of CLD into the Policy and Partnerships service within Chief Executive's had aligned CLD service more closely with community planning structures and was helping increase stakeholder awareness of what is available. The strong, respectful working relationship between the service and partner agencies was recognised, and the joint working with core partners to identify needs and use evidence to target resources was noted.
- 5.4 In their report, inspectors highlighted a number of operational strengths, including:
- A strong volunteering culture and progression pathways for volunteers within CLD;
 - The success of the roll-out of the National Entitlement Card for young people, with Renfrewshire having one of the highest uptakes in the country;
 - the contribution of Street Stuff to a reduction in anti-social behaviour locally;

- the systematic gathering and effective use of data as part of safeguarding processes, leading to more community approaches being developed to help and protect those most at risk;
- The success of several projects in removing barriers to participation in learning;
- The role of Renfrewshire Youth Voice in helping young people have a say in issues impacting on their lives;
- How ESOL classes are helping learners improve their wellbeing.

5.5 The inspection report also identifies areas for development which primarily relate to governance and partnership working in relation to the delivery of community learning and development activities across Renfrewshire. A key finding from the inspection was that a strategic partnership group was not in place in Renfrewshire to oversee CLD activities, and that partners were not sufficiently involved in the development of the CLD strategy and its delivery.

5.6 The inspection team also noted that the CLD strategy itself concentrated very much on the delivery of Council led activities, and although there were a number of positive practice and service led activities, it needed to be much wider in its focus and ambition. The inspection team also highlighted that the current CLD Strategy needed to be underpinned by a robust performance framework that would allow all partners to assess progress in terms of its delivery. This framework also requires to be owned by all strategic partners.

5.7 The CLD Service had undertaken a self- assessment exercise in preparation for the progress visit and had identified a number of these areas for development as part of that process, including the proposed establishment of a new Strategic Partnership Group for CLD, with the first meeting scheduled in May 2024. A wider Partnership Forum will also be set up to ensure regular, formalised engagement with a broad range of partners.

5.8 In line with statutory requirements, the service is required to develop and publish a CLD Plan every 3 years, with a plan for 2024-2027 to be developed and submitted to Education Scotland by 1 September 2024. Officers will work with all local partners to develop this plan, including service users and staff. This will be underpinned by a robust performance framework that will allow partners to track progress and to respond effectively to any emerging needs. It is anticipated that the Plan will be presented to the board for approval in August 2024, with updates on progress provided thereafter on a 6 monthly basis.

6. Connected Communities Programme

6.1 In addition to the improvement actions identified by HM Inspectors, elected members are asked to note that a service review involving the CLD Service is currently underway as part of the Connected Communities programme. The purpose of this programme is to build on the momentum that we have achieved during and after

COVID, in terms of the way in which we work with communities in Renfrewshire. There are significant further opportunities to develop our local approach much further – changing the way in which services work together or share information on a locality basis and also the way in which we reach out as organisation and work with local community and third sector organisations.

- 6.2 A first key step in the development of this programme will be developing a new function which will involve staff from CLD and the Partnerships and Inequalities team. Work is underway at present to develop this approach; further updates will be provided as the programme evolves.

7. Next 6 Months

- 7.1. Over the next 6 months CLD will deliver a number of projects for the benefit of Renfrewshire's communities:

- The Safe Kids programme, raising awareness of risks to P6 pupils, will be delivered across May and June at St Mirren football stadium. Water, road and rail safety, Anti-social behaviour amongst other relevant workshops will take place.
- Summer of Fun activities will again be delivered across the summer holidays as part of a wider programme activity.
- Multiply will offer Family Learning STEM Activities for families over the summer holidays to support adults in their children's learning improving numeracy skills.
- Multiply will further provide literacy and numeracy sessions for Invest clients at the Russell Institute. The age eligibility for the Multiply programme has reduced to include 16–25-year-olds.
- Continue Youth Voice Development for Care Experience young people through the Promise Champions, and include them in the new format of delivering care experienced engagement in communities.

Implications of this report

- 1. Financial – None**
- 2. HR and Organisational Development –** The report includes updates on training and development activity of staff.
- 3. Community/Council Planning –** the work of CLAD is aligned to Community Plan themes.

4. **Legal** – The Council has statutory duties in relation to the planning of community learning and development. The report details work underway to establish partnership governance arrangements.
5. **Property/Assets** – None
6. **Information Technology** – None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – The report does not contain any recommendations which require an equality impact assessment.
8. **Health and Safety** – None
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** – The areas for improvement highlighted in the recent inspection report are risks; corrective actions are being delivered to address these risks.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – None
13. **Climate Risk** – None

List of Background Papers:

None

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