

To: Leadership Board

On: 19 February 2020

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Renfrewshire Skills Action Plan

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report brings a draft Renfrewshire Skills Action Plan to members for their consideration. One of the key actions within the Economic Strategy (published Sept 2019) was the preparation and delivery of a Skills Action Plan. The development of the Renfrewshire workforce to meet the needs of a growing economy and alignment with expanding and emerging sectors such as manufacturing, tourism, care and creative industries is fundamental to achieving the ambitions set out in the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy.
- 1.2 By setting out a series of key actions and responsibilities the Skills Action Plan maintains that Renfrewshire stakeholders, in collaboration, can tackle worklessness, develop workforce capacity, improve productivity, and plan for future skills needs.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
- i. approve the Renfrewshire Skills Action Plan (2020-2023) as attached as an appendix to this report.
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3. Background

- 3.1 In September 2019 Leadership Board accepted the invitation of the Economic Leadership Panel to adopt the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy as Renfrewshire's formal economic plan.

3.2 The approved Economic Strategy includes 2 challenges (out of a total of 8) which are directly related to the skills of the local workforce:

Challenge 2: *To achieve a strong and inclusive economy, bringing more people into work with more secure earnings and greater earning power.*

Challenge 6: *To bring local education and skills provision closer to meeting the needs of the local economy and to the job requirements of the emerging sectors of growth.*

3.3 The Economic Strategy also includes 2 specific ambitions (out of a total of 6) for Renfrewshire that are most relevant to the skills agenda:

- **to reduce economic inactivity by 15% bringing over 3,000 people into the workforce;** and
- **reduce by 60% the number of businesses reporting skills gaps / shortages impacting on their performance;**

3.4 Although Renfrewshire benefits from a relatively strong economy there is a large number of residents who, for a number of reasons, are economically inactive or underemployed. On a number of the qualification metrics (eg. residents qualified at SCQF Level 8, the equivalent of a Higher National Diploma) Renfrewshire lies below the Scottish average. One in ten employers in Renfrewshire have a vacancy which is hard to fill because of a skills shortage (slightly higher than the equivalent rate for Scotland) and around 19% of Renfrewshire employers report skills gaps in their existing workforce.

3.5 Furthermore, the wider workplace context is changing – automation and digital processes are altering the way many businesses and their employees operate. It is essential that the future Renfrewshire workforce (including those currently in employment) are equipped to meet these changing skills requirements.

4. Key issues

4.1 The primary objective of this first Renfrewshire Skills Action Plan is to support the implementation of Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy 2020 – 2030. To this end the Plan is a supporting document of the Economic Strategy and should be read in conjunction with the complementary actions contained therein.

4.2 Both of these documents will require to be kept under review as circumstances change at the Scottish and UK levels. The most obvious change at a macro economic level will be the decision by the UK to leave the European Union and the implications of this for Renfrewshire's economic sectors and its workforce.

- 4.3 The Economic Strategy noted that all levels of education are available in Renfrewshire. Through the implementation of the Economic Strategy there is an opportunity to align the skills and education systems to meet the needs of a growing and successful economy. The strategy set out two main objectives for skills and education to support a growing and inclusive economy:
- To improve qualification and skill levels, enabling Renfrewshire people to access the opportunities of a growing local and regional economy.
 - Through greater collaboration, develop the skills that employers need now, and in the future, and build better knowledge of the world of work.
- 4.4 The Skills Action Plan sets out actions for each of the relevant strategic interventions outlined in the Economic Strategy
- 4.5 Maximising economic growth, which is inclusive and sustainable is a key priority of **Renfrewshire's Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2017 – 2027**. The Skills Plan recognises the need to respond to Renfrewshire's economic growth sectors, to equip local people with the skills required to access the economic opportunities and an increased focus on learning through life to enable people to respond to and navigate an increasingly fluid labour market.

School qualifications

- 4.6 Renfrewshire school qualification levels perform well against national attainment trends. At the point of leaving school, Renfrewshire pupils are in line with the virtual comparator and above the national figures in attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- 4.7 The proportion of Renfrewshire school leavers who have entered a positive destination¹ is 93.1%. While this figure has been increasing it remains lower than the national average (95.2%). However, Renfrewshire has a higher proportion of school leavers entering higher education (43%) than the Scottish average.

Apprenticeships

- 4.8 Apprenticeships are one of the tools that help people to find work, stay in work and progress and improve their well-being. This can contribute significantly to local economic growth that is inclusive, sustainable and fair.
- 4.9 **Foundation apprenticeships** are offered in school as a subject choice at S5 or S6 and is the same level as a higher. Foundation apprenticeships are for 1 or 2 years and are recognised qualifications by all Scottish colleges and universities. They offer students the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience working with an employer out of the classroom.

¹ Higher education; further education; employment; activity agreement and voluntary work

- 4.10 Although numbers significantly increased last year (2019/2020) Foundation apprenticeship take-up in Renfrewshire has been relatively low. The highest proportion in recent years being focused on the health and social services sector, with smaller numbers in engineering and business skills
- 4.11 At a national level Renfrewshire Council has been represented (at Chief Executive level) on the Strategic Leadership Group for manufacturing (“Making Scotland’s Future”). This Group has considered the role of apprenticeships in Scotland’s future manufacturing sector to support the NMIS / AMIDS investments. Discussions are now ongoing between Renfrewshire Council and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on how pilot exemplar projects to support the skills requirements could be initiated in Renfrewshire in collaboration with West College. A presentation on these potential pilot projects will be made to the Strategic Leadership Group in Feb 2020.

Economic inactivity

- 4.12 Renfrewshire’s employment rate is more than 75% and is among the highest across the Glasgow City Region and higher than the national rate of 74.5%. Approximately 20% of the working age population in Renfrewshire are economically inactive, with a large proportion (32%) being long-term sick and likely to require significant support in areas such as improving mental health, tackling drugs and alcohol addiction as well as confronting generational unemployment.
- 4.13 Supporting those who are economically inactive to move into employment and training will increase the potential labour supply for future economic growth in Renfrewshire. Our Economic Strategy aims to bring over 3,000 people who are economically inactive, due to poor health or other issues, back into the workforce or into better paid jobs.
- 4.14 Forecasts from SDS show that in Renfrewshire around 35,000 job openings will emerge in the next 10 years as a result of people leaving the workforce or leaving jobs. Therefore, there are likely to be jobs available right across the local economy including in retailing, transport, administration, early years and childcare, social care, construction, tourism and manufacturing.

Skills Plan format

- 4.15 As stated in the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy: ‘economic leadership, partnership working and coordination in planning and delivery of actions will be key’.

- 4.16 The successful implementation of the actions² outlined in the Skills Plan will require a multi-agency approach. Through collaboration and making the best use of available, and identified new, resources we can maximise the impact of the skills actions to contribute towards the 2030 ambitions of the Economic Strategy by:

Strategic Intervention	Action (example)
creating more jobs	Put in place an NMIS Business Development Senior Officer to engage manufacturing SMEs
growing the economy through supporting business and attracting investment	Undertake a future skills audit for Renfrewshire businesses with a focus on the Economic Strategy growth sectors
attracting more people to live and work in Renfrewshire	Develop a proposition and determine the feasibility of a senior school / adult learning hub focused on higher order / meta-skills
helping people to gain new skills	Pilot a new Foundation Apprenticeship in Renfrewshire: Digital and Manufacturing
reducing economic inactivity, skills gaps and skills shortages	Create a STEM plan for Renfrewshire Schools
creating a strong and inclusive economy, with more secure jobs providing fair and better work	Establish a job brokerage model for Economic Strategy growth sectors, beginning with manufacturing and construction

- 4.17 The Renfrewshire Skills Action Plan is attached as an appendix to this report for members' consideration.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None, beyond existing approved budgets.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community Planning** –
 - **Empowering our Communities** – through further investment in skills and qualifications for local people, new and enhanced employment opportunities will open up for individual Renfrewshire residents;
 - **Jobs and the Economy** – The Renfrewshire Economic Strategy sets out the area's ambitions over the next 10 years. A successful multi-agency collaboration alongside business and communities can see everybody benefit from a stronger inclusive Renfrewshire economy.

² Actions may support delivery of one or more strategic intervention

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.
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List of Background Papers

- Renfrewshire Economic Strategy 2020-2030; Leadership Board; 18 September 2019

The foregoing background papers will be retained within the Chief Executives Service for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officers within the service are Alasdair Morrison; Head of Regeneration; Chief Executive's Service; T-0141 618 4664; alasdair.morrison@renfrewshire.gov.uk and Ruth Cooper; Economic Development Manager; Chief Executive's Service; T-0141618 7868; ruth.cooper@renfrewshire.gov.uk;

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Renfrewshire's Skills Action Plan

2020 – 2023

FINAL DRAFT

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FINAL DRAFT

Introduction

A strong economy needs a skilled and diverse workforce¹. To strengthen and grow the Renfrewshire economy in ways which people, businesses and places can contribute to and benefit from that growth, people must have the right skills to respond to the demands of the labour market and meet employer needs now and in the future.

To navigate and adapt to a rapidly changing labour market people need to re-skill and upskill. Ensuring that everyone can play a part in the economy and that economic growth benefits everyone in Renfrewshire with no one left behind means that we have to provide people with the tools to find work, stay in work and progress and improve their well-being – economic growth that is ‘inclusive, sustainable and fair’.

The OECD Skills Strategy 2019 stated that ‘Countries in which people develop strong skills; learn throughout their lives and use their skills fully and effectively at work and in society are more productive and innovative, enjoy higher levels of trust, better health outcomes and a higher quality of life’²

Renfrewshire today is a place with a huge amount to offer and a significant role to play in the development and growth of the wider region, contributing substantially to Scotland’s economic ambitions, particularly through the delivery of Renfrewshire’s Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District (AMIDS), home to the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland – *‘Making Scotland’s Future’*.

Renfrewshire is the location for campuses of two major knowledge institutions – the University of the West of Scotland and West College Scotland. In addition, strategic partnerships are in place with Glasgow School of Art and the University of Strathclyde and through the Glasgow City Region (GCR) Regional Skills Investment Plan is connected to 12 of Scotland’s colleges and universities across the city region.

Renfrewshire’s Economic Strategy 2020 – 2030 has six strategic ambitions targeting the creation of new jobs; growing the size of the economy; increasing the working age population; tackling economic inactivity; improving skills and growing the size and contribution of Renfrewshire’s manufacturing sector as follows:

- add over 9,000 jobs to the economy;
- add an additional £400million GVA³ each year to the Renfrewshire economy;
- grow the working-age population by 5,000 people;

¹ Scotland’s Programme for Government, 2019

² Skills to Shape a Better Future, OECD Skills Strategy, 2019

³ Gross Value Added (GVA)

- reduce economic inactivity by 15% bringing over 3,000 local people into the workforce;
- reduce by 60% the number of businesses reporting skills gaps / shortages impacting on their performance; and
- grow the Renfrewshire manufacturing sector by 30% (£GVA).

The analysis underpinning Renfrewshire’s Economic Strategy revealed diverse sectoral strengths in manufacturing, construction and transport & storage with new sectors emerging in creative industries, tourism and care. Renfrewshire is improving its competitiveness with over £1.4billion being invested in innovation, economic infrastructure and skills. In order to create a stronger and more inclusive economy with more secure jobs providing fair and better work the economic strategy identified eight core economic challenges (see Appendix 1) to be addressed if we are to achieve our economic ambitions for Renfrewshire by 2030. In relation to education and skills, the analysis highlighted the challenge *“to bring local education and skills provision closer to meeting the needs of the local economy and to the job requirements of the emerging growth sectors”*.

The primary objective of this skills action plan is to support the implementation of Renfrewshire’s Economic Strategy through tackling worklessness, developing workforce capacity and planning for future skills needs. Alongside this the skills action plan is required to:

- ensure that people can contribute to and benefit from sustained economic growth;
- support the delivery of the priorities and key areas of activity outlined in the Renfrewshire Local Outcome Improvement Plan; and
- maximise the impact for Renfrewshire from the implementation of the GCR Skills Investment Plan.

There are several uncertainties that will most likely impact on delivering successfully Renfrewshire’s Economic Strategy and conversely, why we need to have a robust skills plan to enable people and businesses to reach their full potential. The most obvious of these is the UK leaving the EU and the medium and longer-term economic and social impact from BREXIT. Other factors that will impact on the implementation of the skills action plan over time include the impact from changes to the welfare system, the apprenticeship levy, changes in the skills demanded from employers, and future Scottish Government policy. It will be important that Renfrewshire’s Economic Leadership Panel keep the action plan under review and when necessary take a course correction to continue to meet the skills demand from industry and enable people to contribute to and benefit from Renfrewshire’s continued economic growth.

Strategic Context

Policy Context

‘Economy wide policies aimed at increasing skills levels and reducing skills mismatch are often most effective when adapted to the characteristics of local labour markets’⁴ Taking into account the local dimension, the policy and strategy context within which Renfrewshire’s Skills Action Plan has been developed extends to national, regional and local plans.

Scotland’s Economic Strategy (2015) sets out the Scottish Government’s approach for delivering sustainable economic growth across four priority areas: Investment; Innovation; Inclusive Growth; and International.

Specifically, in relation to Investment in People the strategy states “... investment in people is about ensuring a well-skilled, healthy and resilient population and an innovative, engaged and productive workforce”. This investment in people is also reflected in the **National Performance Framework** “investing in the skills and creativity of our workforce...”.

Skills development is a major policy area under the **Strategic Labour Market Framework**. The Scottish Government’s labour market vision is one where a strong labour market drives inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The vision is tied to and aligned with several different strategies and policies including the **Fair Work Action Plan** and **No One Left Behind**, the integration and development of new local employability models.

More recently the **Programme for Government: Protecting Scotland’s Future** reaffirmed the Scottish Government’s vision that “economic growth must benefit everyone, and everyone must have the opportunity to contribute to that growth. It must underpin and drive the well-being of our people”.

The **Economic Action Plan 2018 – 2020** skills aim is to provide a highly skilled workforce through education, training and re-skilling and sets out actions to support a sustained and inclusive economy through employment support, further education and higher education, training, and up-skilling and re-skilling. ‘Skills policies need to be well aligned with industrial and innovation policies so that employers can access the skills they need’ (OECD 2019).

⁴ The Productivity – Inclusiveness Nexus, OECD 2018

The Strategic Plan⁵ from the **Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board** sets out how to further drive productivity and inclusive growth through business growth and creation; exporting; future skill needs; and business models and workplace innovation. The **Future Skills Action Plan** is a response to the Board's recommendation on future skill needs and has a vision for skills where Scotland's highly skilled workforce ensures an ambitious, productive and competitive nation. A skills system that supports people and business is the foundation for achieving these ambitions. The Future Skills Action Plan focuses on four areas:

- increasing system agility and employer responsiveness;
- enhancing access to upskilling and retraining opportunities;
- ensuring sustainability across the skills system; and
- accelerating the implementation of the learner journey review.

The key outcomes from the Future Skills Action Plan include a skilled and productive workforce; high employment; fair work; a skilled population capable of meeting the needs of employers; and a sustainable working population. To achieve these outcomes the Plan recognises the need to evolve and change to meet the challenges and opportunities from a rapidly changing landscape where the nature of work and the skills demanded by employers are driven by megatrends⁶ such as digitalisation, globalisation, demographics and migration.

Tackling inequality is at the heart of the Future Skills Action Plan and as such aligns with other labour market interventions designed to promote inclusive, diverse and fair participation in the labour market⁷ including: A **Fairer Scotland for Women** – gender pay action plan; A **Fairer Scotland for Disabled People**; and the **Race Equality Action Plan**.

The Enterprise and Skills Board strategic plan provides a 'blueprint to Government to turn up the dial on productivity and drive inclusive and sustainable inclusive growth'. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) skills are crucial to achieving this as they stimulate innovation and the development of new technology which in turn drives productivity. The Board highlights critical skill shortages in several areas including in STEM, construction and health and social care – areas at the centre of Renfrewshire's economic growth ambitions. **Scotland's STEM Strategy** was launched in 2017 and set out the main challenges for STEM education, training and lifelong learning:

- We need to ensure children, young people and adults are encouraged to develop an interest in, and enthusiasm for, STEM that is reinforced throughout their lives.
- We need to ensure our education system has the right number of practitioners, including teachers, with the appropriate STEM capability, delivering excellent learning and teaching.
- We need to ensure that our education and training system is equipping people with the skills that employers need and that it has the flexibility to respond to the inevitable changes in labour market demand.

⁵ Working Collaboratively for a Better Scotland, 2018

⁶ Skills to Shape a Better Future, OECD Skills Strategy, 2019

⁷ Scotland's Future Skills Action Plan

- We need to tackle the gender imbalances and other inequities that exist across STEM education and training including in relation to race, disability, deprivation and geography. These are unfair and undermine our ability to deliver inclusive economic growth in Scotland.

The evidence base⁸ underpinning the STEM strategy noted:

- those from deprived areas of multiple deprivation are less likely to participate in STEM either in education or employment;
- there exists a gender imbalance in STEM with women underrepresented across a range of STEM related sectors; and
- under-representation of those from ethnic backgrounds in STEM.

The STEM strategy identifies the need for STEM skills and capabilities across all jobs and careers as well as the need for more specialist STEM skills in STEM sectors of the economy, for example advanced manufacturing. The four aims of the STEM strategy are:

- to build the capacity of the education and training system to deliver **excellent** STEM learning so that employers have access to the workforce they need;
- to close **equity** gaps in participation and attainment in STEM so that everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and contribute to Scotland’s economic prosperity;
- to **inspire** children, young people and adults to study STEM and to continue their studies to obtain more specialist skills; and
- to **connect** the STEM education and training offer with labour market need – both now and in the future – to support improved productivity and inclusive economic growth.

Developing the Young Workforce (2014) is Scotland’s Youth Employment Strategy that focuses on ensuring ‘a work relevant educational experience for our young people’ through, for example engagement between young people and employers; promotion of vocational qualifications and work-based learning opportunities; and averting the risk of young people becoming unemployed. More recently (2018), a report by the Scottish Parliament’s Education and Skills Committee – Young People’s Pathways: a progress report on Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) made several recommendations including identifying the need for:

- increasing information on career pathways for parents and carers;
- improving careers information, advice and guidance;
- adequacy of funding for schools in the delivery of DYW; and
- improving the links between DYW groups and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs).

⁸ Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Evidence Base document, October 2017

Aligned with the DYW programme is the **15-24 Learner Journey Review** which sets out specific commitments to improve the education and skills system including better advice and guidance for young people through direct person centred support; better alignment and clearer routes through the education and skills system through a single vision and whole system approach; and greater work-based learning opportunities.

‘To thrive in the world of tomorrow people will need higher levels and different types of skills’ (OECD, 2019). **Skills 4.0** presents a model of skills for the world tomorrow. This work by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) explores how meta-skills⁹ – skills for the future can help people excel. The work by SDS is still evolving, testing approaches that strengthen the foundations for a sustained, inclusive and high performing economy.

The core purpose of **Skills Development Scotland** (SDS) is to ‘drive productivity and inclusive growth through investment in skills enabling businesses and people to achieve their full potential’. Working collaboratively with Scotland’s enterprise and skills agencies, the SDS Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022 focuses on ensuring:

- all people in Scotland have the skills, information and opportunities to succeed in the labour market;
- Scotland’s businesses drive productivity and inclusive growth; and
- Scotland has a dynamic and responsive skills system.

Skills 2035: A Human Future is a collaborative approach by Scotland’s enterprise and skills agencies to create a shared vision for skills in 2035. This ongoing work is exploring the world of work in 2035 and the impact of megatrends, the understanding of businesses and individuals around the importance and necessity of meta-skills, and new ways of working across the enterprise and skills system.

The GCR Regional Skills and Investment Plan 2019 – 2024 builds on the regions City Deal investment in infrastructure, employment and innovation – ‘a skills system which underpins a strong, inclusive, competitive and outward looking economy’. The skills investment plan has identified six strategic outcomes including city region alignment across education and skills bodies; reducing the percentage of employers reporting skills gaps and skills shortages; and reducing inequalities in employment and earnings.

“**Thriving People, Connected Communities**” is our Renfrewshire Council Plan 2017 – 2022 in which we commit to working to lift people out of poverty, promoting skills and learning for life and ensuring that local people are able to gain the skills and training they need to access sustainable employment.

⁹ Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board, 2018: Higher order skills – self management; social and emotional intelligence; innovation

Maximising economic growth, which is inclusive and sustainable is a key priority of **Renfrewshire's Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2017 – 2027**. The Plan recognises the need to respond to Renfrewshire's economic growth sectors, to equip local people with the skills required to access the economic opportunities and an increased focus on learning through life to enable people to respond to and navigate an increasingly fluid labour market.

Renfrewshire Delivery Context

A lack of co-ordination between different stakeholders across an education and skills system is one of the main obstacles to the successful implementation of skills policies generally.¹⁰ In Renfrewshire there are several different structures / groups for education, employability and skills:

- Skills for Success Group – in school employability / Developing the Young Workforce.
- Local Employability Partnership – age 16+ skills and employability.
- Community Learning and Development – learning, skills and capacity building for adults, young people and communities.
- Economic Leadership Panel Skills Group – skills to support sustained and inclusive growth.

It is evident from successes to date and our work and stakeholder engagement in developing Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy and skills action plan that the good work underway across Renfrewshire is not fully known or as understood as it might be. There is a need to knit together the role and work of the educational institutions and training providers with industry and the economic ambitions of Renfrewshire. Ensuring better alignment, agility and resilience and a shared vision and single system approach to education and skills is key. This is recognised at both a national level and regionally. The implementation of Renfrewshire's Skills Action Plan and horizon scanning to determine future of work and the skills demand across key economic sectors should be employer led, working with the educational institutions, the Council and Government Agencies.

¹⁰ Skills to Shape a Better Future, OECD Skills Strategy, 2019

What the statistics tell us

Qualification levels:

Renfrewshire qualification levels perform well against national attainment trends. In the Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellent Level return, Renfrewshire pupils attain higher than the national level at early level (P1); first level (P2-P4); second level (P5 – P7); and third / fourth level (S1-S3) across literacy and numeracy¹¹. There have also been decreases in the poverty related attainment gaps in literacy and numeracy over 3 years, much of this due to an increase in attainment levels of those living in the most deprived areas. While the size of the poverty related attainment gap has decreased, large differences remain between pupils living in SIMD 20% most deprived areas and those living in 20% least deprived areas. For example, in 2017-18 the size of the gap was 16 percentage points in writing, 15 percentage points in numeracy, 12 percentage points in reading and 9 percentage points in listening and talking. However, Renfrewshire performs above the national figures in all SIMD¹² quintiles in both literacy and numeracy.

Within the senior phase (S4-S6), the INSIGHT tool provides benchmarking data that is used by schools and education authorities for self-evaluation and professional reflection. There are four key measures with data provided by stage and for school leaver cohorts:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy;
- improving attainment for all;
- attainment versus deprivation; and
- leavers destinations.

Insight uses a virtual comparator to compare how young people in a school or authority have performed against similar pupils nationally. At the point of leaving school, Renfrewshire pupils are in line with the virtual comparator and above the national figures in attainment in literacy and numeracy. Attainment at SCQF level 5 has increased by 12 percentage points in literacy and 10 percentage points in numeracy over 5 years.

Improving attainment for all compares the attainment levels of pupils in the 20% lowest attainment cohort, 60% middle attainment cohort and 20% highest attainment cohort. Renfrewshire is in line with or marginally below the virtual comparator in these measures but remains above the national figures in the lowest and middle attainment cohorts.

The attainment vs deprivation measure compares attainment of school leavers across each SIMD decile. In the 2017-18 leavers cohort, Renfrewshire was behind the virtual comparator in all deciles except 8 and 9 but above the national figures in all deciles.

Renfrewshire school leavers who have entered a positive destination¹³ is 93.1%. While this figure has been increasing it remains lower than the national average (95.2%) and the virtual comparator (94.4%). However, Renfrewshire has a higher proportion of pupils

¹¹ Renfrewshire Council, January 2019

¹² Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

¹³ Higher education; further education; employment; activity agreement and voluntary work

entering higher education than nationally. In 2017/18, of those entering a positive destination:

- 43% entered higher education;
- 25% entered further education; and
- 22% entered work.

The number of Renfrewshire residents qualified at SCQF Level 8 (equivalent to a Higher National Diploma) and above is 40.5%, approximately 4% below the Scottish average. SDS data¹⁴ points to skills gaps and shortages identified by employers for occupations requiring this level of qualification.

Enterprise and entrepreneurship in schools:

‘To foster an entrepreneurial culture and support the creation of new and growing business that are successful’ was identified as an economic challenge in Renfrewshire’s Economic Strategy. Increasing the number of business start-ups is a key objective of the strategy. In Renfrewshire there are a range of very good enterprise and entrepreneurship programmes available to local schools – early years, primary and secondary for example, Young Enterprise Schools (YES) Programme; Renfrewshire Schools Dragons Den; and the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI). However, uptake varies across Renfrewshire, with not all schools availing of the opportunity to promote enterprise and entrepreneurship to the new job creators of the future. For example, only 6 secondary schools (approximately 70 pupils) out of 11 participate in the YES Programme.

Apprenticeships:

Apprenticeships are one of the tools that help people to find work, stay in work and progress and improve their well-being thereby contributing significantly to economic growth that is ‘inclusive, sustainable and fair’. An apprenticeship is a partnership between an individual, business, knowledge / training provider, and the Government. Apprenticeships enable people to raise their skills levels and gain recognised qualifications, earn while learning, and meet employer needs in the future thereby addressing skills gaps and skills shortages in the economy. There are three types of apprenticeship people can pursue:

Foundation Apprenticeships

Foundation apprenticeships are offered in school as a subject choice at S5 or S6 and is the same level as a higher. Foundation apprenticeships are for 1 or 2 years and are recognised qualifications by all Scottish colleges and universities. They offer students the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience working with an employer out of the classroom.

¹⁴ UKCES Employer Skills Survey

In the academic year 2019 / 20 across Renfrewshire's 11 secondary schools the total number students eligible to undertake a foundation apprenticeship was 2,787 (S5 & S6), with 47 young people undertaking a foundation apprenticeship with the highest uptake in social services – children and healthcare (38 students). Over the past 4 years the numbers from Renfrewshire schools opting to undertake a foundation apprenticeship has been low:

- 2016/17 – 14 foundation apprentices;
- 2017/17 – 17 foundation apprentices;
- 2018/19 – 19 foundation apprentices; and
- 2019/20 – 47 foundation apprentices .

Modern Apprenticeships

A modern apprenticeship allows an individual to learn on the job, gaining practical skills with an employer that meet the employers needs while working towards a qualification. There are over 100 modern apprenticeships available.

Over the past five years the uptake of modern apprenticeships in Renfrewshire has grown from 987 to over 1,100 in 2018/19. The majority (1,015) of apprenticeships in 2018/19 were at level SCQF 7 or below, spread across 15 different occupancy groupings with the largest being construction (250) followed by health and social care (171). 39% of modern apprenticeship starts in Renfrewshire were female.

Out of 459 modern apprenticeship STEM starts, only 45 (9.8%) were women, reinforcing the under-representation of women across STEM education, training and employment. The top five modern apprenticeship frameworks for females in 2018/19 were social services (children and young people); business administration; hospitality; retail; and social services and healthcare. The top five frameworks for males were construction (technical); automotive; construction (building); logistics and civil engineering.

Graduate Apprenticeships

Graduate apprenticeships are demand led, developed by industry and designed to enable individuals to develop their 'meta-skills', supporting employers through innovation, creativity and problem solving in different roles across a profession. Undertaking a graduate apprenticeship means an individual works, learning on the job while being a student at a college or university working towards a degree or master's degree.

Research from Skills Development Scotland¹⁵ highlighted the benefits of graduate apprenticeships including:

- Apprentices are productive immediately and by year 3 are making a significant impact to the bottom line.
- Higher productivity is achieved through better alignment of skills investment with economic need resulting in less underemployment.
- Apprentices experience higher levels of wellbeing than the general population.

¹⁵ Graduate Apprenticeships Early Activity and Progress

The SDS research also highlighted female graduate apprenticeship starts up from 17.8% in the first year of the programme to 34.3% in 2018/19.

Ten of the twelve graduate apprenticeship frameworks are classified as STEM. In 2018/19 the percentage of female graduate apprenticeships in STEM related subjects was 19.4%.

In Renfrewshire:

- in 2018/19 there were 29 (3.1%) graduate apprenticeship starts, up from 19 (6.8%) in 2017/18;
- there are 14 (3.4%) graduate apprenticeship employers;
- the University of the West of Scotland is one of 13 learning providers across Scotland; and
- in 2018/19 framework uptake by employer was in Business Management; Civil Engineering; Cyber Security; Engineering: Design and Manufacture; and IT: Software Development.

Employability:

Research by the OECD into UK skills challenges¹⁶ identified poor literacy and numeracy impacting the employability of young adults; poor career guidance and the need for repeated employer interaction; the need to improve skills utilisation; need for better incentives for life-long learning; and the need to encourage workers to up-skill to meet the needs of the economy.

In 2019 Renfrewshire's employment rate was 75.5% (85,700 people), among the highest across the City Region and higher than the national rate of 74.5%. Approximately 20% of the working age population in Renfrewshire are economically inactive, with the largest proportion (32%) being long-term sick and likely to require significant support in areas such as improving mental health, tackling drugs and alcohol addiction as well as confronting generational unemployment. Supporting those who are economically inactive to move into employment and training will increase the potential labour supply for future economic growth. Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy aims to bring over 3,000 people who are economically inactive due to poor health or other issues back into the workforce. Bringing more people into work or into better jobs will deliver more secure earnings and greater earning power.

The SDS research also highlights employers in west region¹⁷ are more likely to have a vacancy than employers across Scotland. One-in-ten employers have a vacancy which is hard to fill because of a skills shortage. Around 19% of Renfrewshire employers report skills gaps in their existing workforce and a recent survey by West College Scotland identified

¹⁶ Getting Skills Right, OECD 2017

¹⁷ East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, West Dunbartonshire

nine-out-of-ten employers would provide more training if they could, with time rather than funding being the main barrier to delivering more.

Looking ahead, Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy aims to add over 9,000 jobs over the next decade through investment in economic infrastructure, innovation and skills. In addition, forecasts from SDS show that in Renfrewshire around 35,000 job openings as a result of people leaving the workforce or leaving jobs. The result is that there are likely to be jobs available right across the local economy including in retailing, transport, administration, early years and childcare, social care, construction, tourism and manufacturing.

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Addressing our skills challenge: Action Plan 2020 - 2023

The economic 'skills and education' challenge identified by Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy is:

“To bring local education and skills provision closer to meeting the needs of the local economy and to the job requirements of the emerging growth sectors of the economy”

The economic strategy noted that all levels of education are available in Renfrewshire. Through the implementation of Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy there is an opportunity to align Renfrewshire's skills and education systems to meet the skills needs of a growing and successful economy. The strategy set out two main objectives for skills and education to support a growing and inclusive economy:

- To improve qualification and skill levels, enabling Renfrewshire people to access the opportunities of a growing local and regional economy.
- Through greater collaboration, develop the skills that employers need now, and in the future, and build better knowledge of the world of work.

As outlined in Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy 'economic leadership, partnership working and coordination in planning and delivery of actions will be key'. To implement successfully the actions¹⁸ in this plan will require a multi-agency approach, through collaboration making the best use of resources and maximising the impact of skills actions towards the 2030 ambitions of the economic strategy of creating more jobs, growing the economy through supporting business and attracting investment, attracting more people to Renfrewshire, helping people to gain new skills, reducing economic inactivity, skills gaps and skills shortages – creating a strong and inclusive economy, with more secure jobs providing fair and better work.

¹⁸ Actions may support delivery of one or more strategic intervention

Renfrewshire Skills Action Plan 2020 – 2023

Strategic Intervention	Actions	Lead Partner	Timeframe (provisional)	Resource ¹⁹
Reducing skills gaps and shortages in Renfrewshire, upskilling the existing workforce and equipping people with the skills that will enable them to navigate a fast-changing labour market	Create a STEM plan for Renfrewshire Schools	Renfrewshire Council Children's Services	April 2020	Existing Resources
	Launch an 'all girls' programme to raise awareness and inspire more girls into STEM ²⁰	Employment and Skills Group	April 2021	££
	Localised delivery of the national STEM Strategy through active participation in the development and implementation of the West Region STEM Strategy	Renfrewshire Council Children's Services / Economic Development	TBC	£
	Establish a pilot bursary scheme to attract STEM graduates into teaching	Renfrewshire Council Children's Services	September 2021	£

¹⁹ £ up to £100k; ££ less than £500k; £££ greater than £500k

²⁰ See Alexa Café and STEM Café as examples

	Pilot in Renfrewshire a new Social Care Graduate Apprenticeship.	Skills Development Scotland / University of the West of Scotland	<i>September 2022</i>	<i>££</i>
	Host a 'Festival of Manufacturing' for local schools	Employment and Skills Group	<i>October 2020</i>	<i>£</i>
	Develop a proposition and determine the feasibility of a senior school / adult learning hub focused on higher order / meta-skills	Renfrewshire Council Children's Services	<i>April 2021</i>	<i>£</i>
	Explore the potential of introducing higher order / meta-skills into traditional modern and graduate apprenticeship programmes and local employability initiatives	Skills Development Scotland	<i>February 2021</i>	<i>£££</i>
	Review current provision and explore new initiatives in schools that supports future entrepreneurs, including consideration of a young	Renfrewshire Council Children's Services / Economic Development	<i>November 2020</i>	<i>£</i>

	entrepreneur incubator space			
Helping people to get into work, stay in work and progress in their chosen career	Establish a job brokerage model for Economic Strategy growth sectors, beginning with manufacturing and construction	Renfrewshire Council Economic Development	<i>April 2021</i>	<i>££</i>
	Establish a dedicated AMIDS construction skills programme	Renfrewshire Council Economic Development	<i>September 2020</i>	<i>££</i>
	Review the current employability and community learning & development offers to ensure greater alignment	Renfrewshire Council	<i>May 2020</i>	<i>Existing Resources</i>
	Review the use of community benefit clauses and better align to all Renfrewshire economic investment and employability programmes	Economic Leadership Panel	<i>December 2020</i>	<i>Existing Resources</i>
	Increase the uptake and widen participation in Renfrewshire Council's	Renfrewshire Council Economic Development	<i>March 2021</i>	<i>££</i>

	<p>Community Traineeship Programme</p> <p>Establish a single portal which provides information about jobs, training and skills</p>	Employment and Skills Group	<i>March 2020</i>	<i>TBC</i>
Meeting future skills and higher learning needs through engagement with local employers and joined-up academic and skills planning at a local level	<p>Establish a single “Employment and Skills Group”</p> <p>Undertake a future skills audit for Renfrewshire businesses with a focus on the Economic Strategy growth sectors</p> <p>Develop bespoke training for businesses based on the results from the skills audit</p> <p>Undertaken an awareness raising campaign of the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy for local businesses</p>	<p>Renfrewshire Economic Development / Children’s Services</p> <p>Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>West College Scotland</p> <p>Renfrewshire Council Economic Development / Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p><i>May 2020</i></p> <p><i>April 2021</i></p> <p><i>Post April 2021 – December 2023</i></p> <p><i>April 2020</i></p>	<p><i>Existing Resources</i></p> <p><i>££</i></p> <p><i>££</i></p> <p><i>£</i></p>

	<p>Undertake horizon scanning research to meet future economy skills demands</p> <p>Ensure greater alignment between knowledge institutions and business to better meet skills demand</p> <p>Ensure greater alignment across Renfrewshire Place-shaping services – capital investment, employability, CLD, regeneration, planning etc.</p>	<p>Employment and Skills Group</p> <p>Employment and Skills Group</p> <p>Renfrewshire Council</p>	<p><i>January 2020 onwards</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing</i></p>	<p><i>£</i></p> <p><i>Existing Resources</i></p> <p><i>Existing Resources</i></p>
Complementing the Regional Skills Investment Plan produced by Skills Development Scotland	Active participation in delivery through the GCR City Deal structures	Renfrewshire Council Chief Executive's Function / Economic Development	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>Existing Resources</i>
Work with employers in designing learning to deliver industry relevant skills and integrate STEM skills across all programmes	Undertake a series of sector employer engagement events to inform future curriculum design	West College Scotland	<i>Throughout 2020</i>	<i>£</i>

	<p>Through the West Region STEM Hub promote STEM learning opportunities and pathways for school pupils, improving teaching staff skills and industry awareness</p> <p>Launch a Digital Strategy and development of new digital learning and teaching resources</p>	<p>West College Scotland</p> <p>West College Scotland</p>	<p><i>January 2020 – December 2023</i></p> <p><i>Autumn 2019 / early 2020</i></p>	<p><i>Existing Resources</i></p> <p><i>££</i></p>
<p>Improve and expand school engagement in career information, advice and guidance, training and skills with a focus on schools with a high concentration of pupils from SIMD areas</p>	<p>Review and enhance careers advice through Renfrewshire schools in line with the DYW 2018 Progress Report recommendations</p> <p>Promote career opportunities, advancement and the attractiveness of key growth sectors across schools (including parents and carers), WCS and UWS</p>	<p>Skills Development Scotland / Renfrewshire Council Children's Services</p> <p>Renfrewshire Council Economic Development</p>	<p><i>September 2020</i></p> <p><i>November 2020 and Annually</i></p>	<p><i>Existing Resources</i></p> <p><i>£</i></p>

	Develop a pilot 'Teachers into Industry programme	Renfrewshire Council Economic Development	<i>September 2021</i>	<i>££</i>
	Undertake an annual awareness raising campaign for Foundation Apprenticeships for parents/carers, pupils and teachers	West College Scotland / Renfrewshire Council Children's Services	<i>March 2020 to December 2023</i>	<i>£</i>
	Expand the Chamber of Commerce's Schools Partnership to all schools and include input into skills-based curriculum development	Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce / Renfrewshire Council Children's Services	<i>December 2020</i>	<i>£</i>
	Undertake an awareness raising campaign of the Economic Strategy for schools, including developing a young person's version of the strategy for all pupils and integration into social sciences / modern studies lessons	Renfrewshire Council Economic Development / Children's Services	<i>April 2020</i>	<i>£</i>
				<i>£</i>

	Implement a two-year personalised employability readiness programme for senior pupils in Renfrewshire schools	Renfrewshire Council Children's Services / Career Ready	<i>January 2020 – December 2022</i>	
Work with the NMIS Skills Academy to implement skills development programmes for Renfrewshire manufacturing companies	Pilot in Renfrewshire a new Foundation Apprenticeship in Digital and Manufacture	Renfrewshire Council / Skills Development Scotland	<i>Phase 1: October 2020 Phase 2: October 2022</i>	<i>TBC</i>
	Develop a knowledge exchange programme among manufacturing SMEs	Renfrewshire Council / NMIS	<i>TBC</i>	<i>TBC</i>
	Establish a skills development pipeline and training for SMEs and promote collaboration with NMIS	West College Scotland	<i>April 2020 – December 2022</i>	<i>TBC</i>
	Put in place an NMIS Business Development Senior Officer to engage manufacturing SMEs	Renfrewshire Council / Skills Development Scotland	<i>April 2020</i>	<i>TBC</i>

<p>Work as a partnership and with organisations such as Glasgow Science Centre to build visibility of science, digital, technology, engineering and manufacturing careers from young ages and regularly through school</p>	<p>Develop a pilot programme offering high quality STEM experiences for children and young people and to build greater knowledge and experiences for teaching staff</p>	<p>Renfrewshire Council Children's Services / Glasgow Science Centre</p>	<p><i>TBC</i></p>	<p><i>£</i></p>
<p>Accelerate collaboration between companies and education / training providers to develop and expand the use of foundation, modern and graduate apprenticeships</p>	<p>Promote to SMEs the benefits of investment in training and workforce development</p> <p>Raise awareness and encourage uptake of initiatives and support available across Government and from Renfrewshire Council</p> <p>Explore the potential for extending the Renfrewshire Apprenticeship Academy</p>	<p>Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Skills Development Scotland / Renfrewshire Council Economic Development</p> <p>West College Scotland</p>	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing</i></p> <p><i>December 2020</i></p>	<p><i>£</i></p> <p><i>Existing Resources</i></p> <p><i>Existing Resources</i></p>

	Undertake an annual awareness raising campaign for Graduate Apprenticeships with Renfrewshire businesses	University of the West of Scotland / Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce	<i>September 2020 to December 2023</i>	<i>£</i>
	Raise awareness and encourage more women into STEM modern apprenticeships	Employment and Skills Group / STEM West	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>£</i>
	Work with business to celebrate the success of workforce development	Employment and Skills Group	<i>Annually</i>	<i>£</i>
Implement collaborative models of skills development, training and apprenticeships for established businesses	Undertake a feasibility study for a Renfrewshire Apprenticeship Job Brokerage model	West College Scotland	<i>April 2021</i>	<i>£</i>
	Establish a peer to peer mentoring programme for SMEs	Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce	<i>TBC</i>	<i>£</i>
	Create a programme on development and leadership capacity among SMEs	Renfrewshire Council Economic Development	<i>September 2020</i>	<i>££</i>

Appendix 1: Renfrewshire's economic challenges

Challenge 1

To achieve a continued growth in the working-age population by retaining and attracting more people to live, learn and work here.

Challenge 2

To achieve a strong and inclusive economy, bringing more people into work with more secure earnings and greater earning power.

Challenge 3

To foster an entrepreneurial culture and support the creation of new and growing businesses that are successful.

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.

Challenge 5

To boost the productivity and competitiveness of our businesses across all economic sectors through the promotion of investment in R&D and innovation.

Challenge 6

To bring local education and skills provision closer to meeting the needs of the local economy and to the job requirements of the emerging sectors of growth.

Challenge 7

To improve the economic infrastructure of Renfrewshire, including better public transport provision, rail and road capacity, and the provision of new digital connectivity and networks.

Challenge 8

To make available land for business expansion, new business formation and inward investment.

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