



## Management Board Meeting

### Development and Improvement Groups (DIGs): Highlights and Issues Report

FOR INFORMATION ONLY	X
FOR DECISION	

Name of DIG	Flourishing Delivery and Improvement Group (DIG).
Date of report	11/04/2023
Name and email of lead contact	Peter Barry <a href="mailto:peter.barry@west-dunbarton.gov.uk">peter.barry@west-dunbarton.gov.uk</a>

1	Highlights of activity and progress since last meeting
---	--------------------------------------------------------

**Regeneration**

**Dumbarton**

Levelling Up Programme

- Planning application for Glencairn House to be reported to Planning Committee in April
- Pre-construction public meetings held for Connecting Dumbarton programme; due to start May one month behind schedule
- Promotional video on Dumbarton town centre undertaken by Levelling Up Fund team including an interview with Chamber of Commerce and local shop

**Alexandria**

- Discussions held with Alexandria town centre traders group on the potential impact of Fountain restoration project
- Scotlands Towns Partnership was invited to a meeting of the traders group to discuss a possible Business Improvement District
- Guidelines for the first phase of Shared Prosperity Funded shopfront improvement grants produced ready for launch in April

## **Clydebank**

### **Queens Quay District Heating Network**

- West College Scotland Board approved the connection to the network in February, programmed for August 2023
- Following the preparation of a new business plan for the network, Golden Jubilee Hospital submitted a funding application to Scottish Government for adaptations to the Hospital needed for connection

### **Town Centre**

- Pre-application discussions for the Clydebank Canal-side Activities Centre underway

### **Exxon**

- Unfortunately the Stage 2 Vacant and Derelict Land Grant Fund application to deliver greenspace and access improvements on the Exxon site was not approved, however we intend to resubmit for the following year's (2024/25) funding round

### **Business Support**

- Work is underway on the action plan for the Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027
- Application forms and Eligibility & Guidelines have been prepared for the Shared Prosperity Fund business grants in readiness for their launch in April
- Economic Development is seeking contributions from other Departments to inform our response to the Community Wealth Building consultation, deadline 25 April.
- Year- end figures for advice provided to new start businesses is 205, slightly more than the target of 200.
- During 2022/23, there were 56 Business Gateway webinars organised with 346 attendees.
- The finalist interviews are being held week commencing 17 April to determine the winner of each category for the Business Awards event being held on 26 May.

### **Employability**

- Discussions about the availability of UKSPF funds and No One Left Behind funds are at an advanced stage and we hope to receive grant award letters in the forthcoming period;
- The Working4U employer engagement team aim is to engage and support businesses within West Dunbartonshire Council with their recruitment and training needs. In Q4 we have engaged with 50 employers to support their recruitment;

- Our weekly outreach slots in both Clydebank and Dumbarton Jobcentre are well established and continue to generate new referrals. We also continue to have a presence in libraries across West Dunbartonshire to facilitate drop-ins and face to face support.
- W4U Big Event held on Tuesday 21st March in Clydebank Town Hall. Successful event promoting all opportunities across West Dunbartonshire.
- NOLB funding was utilised to fund one off training opportunities for individuals linked to a specific career path or job offers.
- In 22/23 we have secured sufficient information to report that we supported 296 people who had a disability or health issue. Staff continue to target support to those considered to be most disadvantaged. Specialist support is offered in partnership with local providers to ensure the needs of service users continue to be met.

## 2 | Outline of any issues/risks and how these are being managed

### **Regeneration**

Inflation and rising costs are a challenge in project delivery. We are looking at adjusting scope to make projects affordable, or seeking additional funding where possible.

### **Business Support**

Businesses continue to face many challenges including inflation and rising energy costs. It is therefore important that working4business partners continue to provide support and assistance to our local businesses to help them to recover and grow. The business support programmes available through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from April 2023 will provide much needed additional financial support to our local businesses.

### **Employability**

The risks for the employability service centres on the ability to secure reliable external training providers capable of delivering services in the local area. We are managing this by providing each grant recipient with a key contact and providing them with the opportunity to identify delivery challenges at an early stage.

We are currently awaiting the grant award letters for UK Shared prosperity Funding and No One Left Behind Funds. This delay causes considerable uncertainty among staff and service provider with the potential to disrupt the continuity of service provision.

## 3 | Outline of the main outputs expected before next meeting

### **Regeneration**

- Clydebank, Activity Centre – planning application submitted
- Dumbarton, Connecting Dumbarton – commencement of the construction works on site
- Dumbarton, Artizan – demolition contractor appointment
- Dumbarton, Artizan – appoint a Design Team to develop designs, obtain planning permission and support delivery of the Artizan redevelopment works
- Alexandria, Smollet Fountain – contractor appointment depending on outcome of local consultations
- Exxon Full Business Case developed to unlock City Deal for infrastructure funding

### **Business Support**

- Launch and promotion of the new business support programmes within the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Finalise the Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 Action Plan and obtain approval through IRED Committee.
- Promotion of Successful Business Awards Event & Winners.
- Complete and return consultation response for Community Wealth Building

### **Employability**

- We are moving towards the end of the reporting year and while we do not have the full results in, we can report that:
  - Our employability teams have supported 859 people during the course of the year.
  - We have supported 451 people to secure employment;
  - 241 of those supported reached the 6 month stage in employment during the year;
  - through support from employability services. 355 people have entered education or training;
  - 242 have secured a qualification.

4	What are your requirements of partners in the Community Planning Management Board to achieve the outcomes of the DIG?
---	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

### **Placemaking**

Good placemaking will continue to underpin the regeneration, development and improvement work in the town centres as we aim to align funding and resources, with Council, DIG partners and external funding, to achieve our ambitions.

### **Business Support**

The on-going commitment and support from the community partners will help to maximise the impacts of the business support activity being developed and implemented through the Flourishing DIG. This will assist with reinforcing our efforts to develop a strong local economy that will provide access to opportunity for all in West Dunbartonshire.

### **Employability**

We will continue to deliver the NOLB and Parental Employability support programmes. To this we will add UK Shared prosperity activity. We will continue to work in partnership through the local employability partnership and ask the partners to continue with their contribution to the strategic group; the creative design group and the frontline community of interest. These groups are making a positive contribution to identifying and addressing challenges in West Dunbartonshire.

5	Please outline any good news story you wish to share
---	------------------------------------------------------

### **Business Support**

High Growth Start-Up Challenge Fund provided funding of £5,000 to 5 start-up businesses with high growth potential to help them to implement their growth plans more efficiently, create jobs and become more sustainable in the longer term. Successful applicants were Gol Kick Ltd; Natural Dermal Lab Ltd; Paperflute Ltd; Tradesman Technologies Ltd and Velvet Rose Designs.