



## 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	23/01/2023
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
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**Regeneration**

**Clydebank**  
 Canal-side Activities Centre in Clydebank town centre will be delivered in 2023. Pre-planning meeting was held in January 2023 and Planning Application is expected to be submitted in February. The project is due to be completed by October 2023 and will be managed by Y Sort It. We will work with Shaping Places For Wellbeing Programme to develop a pipeline of viable projects in relation to the Clydebank Town Centre Development Framework.

**Dumbarton**  
 Council is progressing with the ambitious £19.9m Dumbarton Town Centre regeneration programme for which we received Levelling-Up funding from UK government. Remodelling of the Artizan shopping centre is in the project development phase, with the first phase of demolition due to start on site in May. This will be followed up by introduction of meanwhile uses in temporary spaces, and property and landscaping improvements. Feasibility work on possible developments within the Artizan site that would bring footfall to the town centre is underway. Planning Application for Glencairn house was submitted in January 2023 and designs will be shortly displayed in Church Street for the public to view. Connecting Dumbarton works are due to start on site in April and a public meeting will be organised in advance to engage with the local residents who will be affected by the temporary traffic restrictions.

### **Alexandria**

Phase 1 of the Smollet Fountain works has been completed in November and delivered improved public realm in the vicinity of the fountain including wider pavements and pedestrian crossings. Phase 2 of the works which will see the historic fountain refurbished and brought back to its former glory, will start on site later this year. We are working to develop further Masterplan projects which will enable further funding from Scottish Government's Place Based Improvement Programme to be invested in Alexandria Masterplan projects.

### **Energy Centre**

The West Dunbartonshire Energy Centre and Heat Network have been operational since November 2020 delivering heat to The Leisure centre, Care Home, Titan Enterprise, and Aurora House. The District Heating Network is performing well and the newly established West Dunbartonshire Energy LLP is overseeing its growth. The 147 Social Housing units on Titan Boulevard are connected. Clydebank Housing Association has also agreed to connect 45 flats on Dumbarton Road, subject to funding. Since the last report to CPWD, talks have progressed with the Golden Jubilee Hospital and West College Scotland, and subject to the agreement of funding, timescales for connection have been developed. Discussions are also advanced with Clydebank Health Centre. The Council are pursuing funding from the Scottish Government Green Growth Accelerator and Heat Network funds to enable expansion and connection from the Golden Jubilee to the Dalmuir multi story flats and officers continue to work with the Queens Quay landowners to bring in 1,000 new homes.

### **Exxon**

The City Deal Exxon project is progressing as planned as are the plans to convert the brownfield Carless site into a Scottish Marine Technology Park in co-operation with the Malin Group. A Stage 2 Vacant and Derelict Land Grant Fund application to deliver greenspace and access improvements on the Exxon site to realise the wider ambitions of the masterplan has been submitted and we await the outcome in early 2023.

### **Business Support**

A new Economic Development Strategy has been developed which provides an updated economic vision and strategic priorities for West Dunbartonshire for a five year period from 2022-2027. This strategy was approved by the Infrastructure, Regeneration and Economic Development Committee on 2 November 2022. An action plan is currently being developed to assist with the implementation of the strategy which has the following five objectives:

- Stimulating economic investment and growing the business base;
- Establishing an inclusive economy by improving the skills of our people and supporting them into work;
- Creating a prosperous place where people choose to live, work, visit and invest;
- Addressing climate change and supporting a green recovery;
- Building stronger partnerships and new approaches to delivery.

The Local Investment Plan which was developed for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and submitted to the UK Government for their consideration as part of a wider Glasgow City Region Investment Plan has been approved. The business support proposals within the Investment Plan will be available from April 2023 and include a Business Recovery & Growth fund, Early Stage Growth grants, Towards Net Zero Grant, Enhancing Tourism Events & Attractions Fund, Business Gateway Expert Help and Shopfront & Small Business Improvement Grants.

Since April 2022, the Business Support team have provided advice through Business Gateway to support over 160 new start-up businesses. Business Growth Advisers have also continued to work with established businesses to provide continued advice and grant support to help them to recover and grow. A Start-Up Business Survival Monitoring exercise has been completed for the start-up businesses that received support and advice through the Business Gateway service during 2021/22. The data shows that of the 201 start-ups supported during 2021/22, 147 (73%) were still in business in January 2023.

A High Growth Start-Up Challenge Fund has been delivered in partnership with the Working4Business group and has provided funding of up to £5,000 to assist early stage businesses with growth potential to increase their turnover and create local jobs. This competitive fund launched during September and Working4Business partners have assisted with the approval process which included the scoring of applications and panel interviews. In total, 10 applications were received for the fund with 5 businesses being successful and receiving a £5,000 grant award to assist their growth ambitions.

The Scottish Government have provided additional funding to continue the delivery of the national Digital Boost Programme. The Digital Boost programme delivers Information and Communications Technology (ICT) advice to businesses across the country. A quick quote tender exercise has been undertaken by West Dunbartonshire Council for both East Dunbartonshire and West Dunbartonshire Council areas for Phase 7 Digital Boost activity. The successful supplier was NS Design Ltd. So far, 6 businesses in West Dunbartonshire and 4 businesses in East Dunbartonshire have been provided with up to 21 hours of one-to-one consultancy support.

The Working4Business group have agreed that the next Business Awards event will be held in May 2023. All the sponsorship for the award categories has been secured and the host of the event has been confirmed as Jennifer Reoch. Jennifer is best known for hosting shows such as Live at Five, Scots in Paradise and the Scottish Children's Lottery. She also currently co-presents the Heart Scotland Drive time Radio Show with Des Clarke. The Business Awards will open for applications week commencing Monday 30 January 2023.

### **Employability**

In the previous report we illustrated the work of the local employability partnership outlining progress in the development of our approach to employability service delivery and engaging specialist input from the third and private sector.

We are currently engaging with 14 organisations who are delivering services on our behalf. These services complement the case management approach that is being lead by Working4U.

We also reported that we were developing our contribution to the UK shared Prosperity Investment Plan. That plan has been endorsed and the funds, approximately £3.8m will be available in the forthcoming months.

The UKSPF will be used to deliver activities in four investment areas over the next two years. The four investment areas are:

- Communities and Place - to enable places to invest to restore their community spaces and relationships and create the foundations for economic development and build resilient and safe neighbourhoods through targeted investment and crime prevention.
- Supporting Local Business – to enable places to fund interventions that support local businesses to thrive, innovate and grow. This includes visible improvements to local retail, hospitality and leisure sector facilities and targeted support for small and medium sized businesses to undertake new to firm innovation, adopt productivity enhancing energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques.
- People and Skills – to reduce the barriers some people face to employment and support them to move towards employment; reduce levels of economic inactivity through investment in bespoke intensive life and employment support tailored to local need; and provide skills development through a wider range of routes.
- Multiply –to address numeracy skills with specific emphasis on supporting people in the 19+ years age group too secure maths qualifications.

The suite of projects we will deliver are summarised in the Appendix.

The Working4U Team is also preparing plans for the delivery of a range of services through the use of Parental Employability Support and No One Left behind. Discussions are ongoing with the Scottish Government about the scale of the programme and further information will be available in the new financial year.

2	Outline of any issues/risks and how these are being managed
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**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.

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.

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

- Clydebank, Activity Centre – Planning Application submitted
- Dumbarton, Connecting Dumbarton – commencement of the construction works on site
- Dumbarton, Artizan – demolition contractor appointment
- Dumbarton, Artizan – commencement of property improvement works
- Alexandria, Smollet Fountain – contractor appointment
- Alexandria, Masterplan – design team appointment to deliver the Masterplan project: Green Heritage Corridors and Walking and Cycling Network.

### Business Support

- Development of processes, application forms and eligibility guidelines for the new business support programmes within the UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Finalise the Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 Action Plan
- Promotion of Business Awards to local businesses to encourage applications
- Delivery of Digital Boost programme for 2022/23

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

Meanwhile, in the first two quarters of 2022/2023 we have supported over 1500 people to access employability services, with 350 securing employment. During the same period 397 people have secured a qualification and 933 have entered education or training. In addition, we have assisted people to maximise income through benefits with approximately £3.82m of additional income being secured by people using our benefits advice service.

5	Please outline any good news story you wish to share
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## **Business Support**

The advice and grant support provided to the Bee School through the Business Support team has been picked up by the Business Gateway National Unit and has been promoted nationally as a promotional case study for the Business Gateway service. The following link provides further information on the case study:

<https://scottishbusinessnews.net/business-gateway-helps-beekeeping-school-create-a-buzz/>

West Dunbartonshire Council has secured £3.8m to deliver a range of projects funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This will include activities to support business development, assist people to secure employment and help learners to achieve qualifications.

## UK Shared Prosperity Projects

Priority and Actions	Brief Description
<b>Community and Place</b>	
S1: Place based investments, regen & town centre improvements (Capital)	<b>Shopfront and Small Business Improvement Grants</b> - This project will work with both new and existing business that are located within the high street areas of the 3 main towns of the Council area. The grant will encourage investment and repairs in highly visible shop frontages, enhancing the visual appearance and accessibility of retail properties and our high streets. Grants will be to a maximum of 70% of project costs.
S3 : Improvements to the natural environment green and open space	<b>Pride in Place</b> – (Housing/ Fire Scotland/Communities/Greenspace Project) will focus on building on pride in place centred round a Community Garden supporting neighbourhoods and partnerships working to reduce anti-social behaviour. It will provide opportunities for organisations to share experiences, work through challenges. It will capture valuable insights into key enablers and barriers to making progress and will use evidence to measure and demonstrate progress.
S4: Design and management of the built and landscaped environment	<b>CCTV</b> -This will focus on the required equipment for an effective CCTV system. The majority of funding will be for capital costs with a smaller amount of seed funding for staff (two fte for 2 years) to develop community provision and partner opportunities.
S9: Investment in capacity building & resilience for local groups	<p><b>West Dunbartonshire Pantry Network</b> - Community Pantries offer a dignified and sustainable approach to addressing food insecurity and food poverty. They divert surplus food away from landfill and promote local opportunity for sustainable food provision and production.</p> <p><b>Community Soups in West Dunbartonshire.</b> Engagement to develop small community-based projects that will improve the quality of life in local areas. This project will include a community network/steering group to provide a forum for local development across communities in West Dunbartonshire.</p> <p><b>Participatory Budgeting (PB)/Funding Bulletin</b> – Awareness /training/funding resource. This project will embed an understanding of Participatory Budgeting (PB) and an approach to mainstreaming. This is in response to the commitment for local authorities across Scotland to allocate 1% of their annual budget by PB.</p>
<b>Supporting Business</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>
S14: Development & promotion of the visitor economy	<b>Enhancing West Dunbartonshire's Tourism Events &amp; Attractions</b> - This fund will support and promote new or enhance existing events and visitor attractions in West Dunbartonshire which involve activity aimed at raising the area's profile as a visitor destination and will increase visitor numbers to the area. Grants of up to £10,000 will be available.

Priority and Actions	Brief Description
S15: SME development grants & support.	<p><b>Business Recovery &amp; Growth Grant</b> - 50% up to a maximum of £10,000 to businesses to provide a financial contribution towards growth projects which will both create local jobs and assist with their continued recovery.</p> <p><b>Towards Net Zero Grant</b> - A combination of expert advice and grant support to help businesses move towards net zero emissions. We will work in partnership with Business Energy Scotland to provide local businesses with a Resource Efficiency Business Audit. The Towards Net Zero grant will then provide 50% financial contribution of up to £10,000 to businesses to help implement agreed energy efficiency improvements.</p>
S20: Expert business advice & support programmes, local & regional	<b>Expert Help for Businesses</b> - Expert Help will allow businesses to access fully funded consultancy support from a specialist who will provide tailored, expert advice in areas such as Business Strategy, Sales, Marketing, Financial Management, Digital Marketing & Social Media and Intellectual Property. This will be in addition to existing Business Gateway Expert Help.
S25: Developing existing or emerging local strengths - low carbon & climate	<b>Early Stage Growth Grants</b> - The failure rate of start-up businesses is well documented, but if businesses can survive their early years, they have a far greater chance of being sustainable for the long term. We will offer a grant of up to £1,500 for businesses that have been trading for less than 18 months that can demonstrate that they have growth potential. Eligibility will include having taken on premises in West Dunbartonshire and/or that they have employed staff.
People and Skills	Brief Description
S31: Employment support for economically inactive people	Case managed support for economically inactive people, including assessment, action plan and support to progress towards and into employment. This will include support with confidence, self esteem and the development of presentable skills sets.
S35: Employability programmes & advice - No One Left Behind agenda etc	Case managed support for people with barriers that prevent them considering work as an option. Proactive integration and alignment with housing, health and social care, criminal justice.
S36: Local areas to fund local skills needs	Competitive grant fund for specialist employability support and access to skills development in key sectors. Ensuring support is available for the development of vocational and non vocational skills supporting engagement, sector specific skills and in-work progression. This will also include support to develop skills, presentation of skills and in-work progression for those who are not economically inactive.
S39: Vulnerable young people	Case managed support for young people, including assessment, action plan and support to progress towards and into employment. This will include support with confidence, self esteem and the development of presentable skills sets.
Programme Management	4% costs for development, management, administration, monitoring and reporting



Priority and Actions	Brief Description
Multiply	Brief Description
S42: Courses designed to increase confidence with numbers	Employing CLD tutors to develop and deliver programmes in the community using a social practice approach in order to engage with learners and improve confidence with numbers. Working to the needs of learners this will include delivery of accredited learning.
S43: Courses for parents wanting to increase numeracy skills	Development Officer who will liaise with schools to raise awareness and develop partnerships, as well as organising a variety of numeracy courses to be delivered by Multiply tutors, based on learners' needs and using innovative resources, such as 'Maths on Toast'.
S45: Courses aimed at encouraging people to upskill to access jobs/careers	A development officer will work with Employability case workers to identify service users who require maths qualifications and increased confidence in maths to apply for sector specific jobs. This will include support for those in employment as well as those seeking to develop their work-based skills.
S46: Additional relevant maths modules in vocational courses	A development officer will be employed to work in partnership with West College Scotland to embed maths modules into existing vocational courses with additional learner led support offered as required in order to ensure success with their qualifications and build confidence in maths.
S47: Innovative programmes delivered with employers	Employer Engagement staff will link with local employers with particular focus on skills gaps in maths to help existing employees progress in the workplace and support residents seeking employment who require to pass an maths assessment.
S48: Intensive& flexible courses targeted at those without Level 5 maths	The Development Officer will also liaise and work in partnership with West College Scotland in order to organise a greater variety of maths qualifications and extend the SCQF level, we will build on our partnership with West College Scotland to provide: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dedicated Maths qualifications; and</li> <li>2. Explore accrediting Community and Work-based Numeracy.</li> </ol>
S49: Courses designed to help people use numeracy to manage money	The project will provide financial literacies to community, including numeracy and financial literacies support for a range of individuals and groups such as care leavers, young parents and those with experience in the criminal justice system. The Development Officer will liaise with relevant colleagues, such as health and social care, Criminal Justice Team and other partner organisations from the Third Sector to organise support. The support will be delivered by Multiply Tutors.
S51: Provision developed in partnership with community organisations	A Development Officer will build on relationships with community and support groups/organisations which have been established by the Adult Learning and Literacies Team to target potential learners with multiple barriers to opportunity, including care leavers. We will use a Social Practice approach to engage with learners in order to develop courses, which will enable learners to achieve positive outcomes across the 4 areas of life. This will include raising awareness of the importance of numeracy and developing a positive vibe around maths.