

Appendix 2: Economic Development Extract from the Regulatory & Regeneration Delivery Plan 2021/22

Overview of Service

The Economic Development Service has responsibility for a range of strategic regeneration initiatives, for contributing to the sustainable economic growth of West Dunbartonshire, and for energy and compliance. It comprises three service areas: Business Support, Regeneration, and Energy & Compliance.

Business Support provides advice and support through a range of discretionary grants, loans and bespoke business support interventions offering flexible assistance to local businesses, including the delivery of Business Gateway. The overall objective is to increase employment and to help create sustainable economic wellbeing within the local economy.

Regeneration focuses on unlocking key strategic sites of both the Council and others to create the opportunity to secure economic growth through regeneration across the Council area and with a number of strategic partners. Delivering the capital projects with the Local Economic Development budget and the Regeneration Fund, the Town Centre Fund, completion of Queens Quay and actions from the various Charrettes events over the last few years, the small team led on significant regeneration projects right across the authority area.

Energy & Compliance ensures the effective provision of energy services and the Council's response to the climate change agenda by way of a comprehensive sustainability, carbon reduction and energy management regime. It also currently leads on supporting all service areas in delivering actions to achieve net zero emission by 2045, as set out by our Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. Compliance is a key component of this team and includes compliance, training, development and monitoring areas such as asbestos and legionella.

Key Achievements in 2020/21

Cross Service

- Services across R&R responded admirably to the challenges posed by COVID-19. They adapted quickly to meet the significant additional demands of the pandemic and the national and local response to it. This included:
 - adapting Registration services to meet the vastly altered workload;
 - supporting compliance with COVID-19 legislation and guidance across West Dunbartonshire through Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards;
 - adapting committee procedures to allow transparent democratic decision making to continue;
 - providing extensive advice to businesses and the public in relation to available support, for example, business grants through Business Support;
 - providing support, particularly through legal services, to other Council services, including Education and Social Work, to meet the challenges of the pandemic and ever changing legislation and guidance.

In addition, we ensured the safe continuation of front line services, particularly Registration, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Licensing, Planning & Building Standards and Business Support. The move to home working was also very successful. While there was some impact on some service delivery given the scale of the change in how services were provided, the impact was minimal.

- Strong collaborative working by Regeneration, Planning, Building Standards, Environmental Health and Legal Services on key regeneration sites with infrastructure works complete on Queens Quay. This has enabled the completion of the District Heating Energy Centre and the new Care Home, which is now receiving residents, and the construction work continues on the new Clydebank Health Centre and 146 affordable homes on the site with occupation due in late 2021/22. The Council has agreed missives for the acquisition of the Exxon site with planning permission recently granted for commercial/ industrial floor space, a new link road and major infrastructure upgrades to the A82 and A814 on this brownfield site.

Economic Development

- The Business support team delivered the Business Gateway service achieving a reduced range of agreed targets during the pandemic period in 2020. Together with a series of workshops and business engagements and grant support, the service functioned successfully in a virtual environment.
- The particular focus of the Business Support team has been the delivery of Scottish Government Grants, which as of early March 2021 equated to more than £22m of funding to more than 1,800 organisations with a range of grants continuing to be provided throughout 2021.
- Developed and launched the Council's Climate Change Strategy, a route map for a net zero future.
- In Alexandria, the Regeneration team developed a new Town Centre Masterplan, progressed Town Centre funding and worked with the community on successful RCGF grant for St Andrew's Church. Mitchell Way with a Lidl store continuing to be progressed.
- Dumbarton Town Waterfront saw significant developments with the Cullross development and new Lidl store with associated waterfront pathway completed up to the Turnberry boundary
- In Clydebank, the £15.62m investment at Queens Quay was completed successfully along with the £20m district heating network with heat on in 2020. Melfort Bio-diversity Park was completed in early 2021 and south Sylvania way public realm works was also completed successfully.
- The Exxon project, as part of our £34.05m City Region Deal project, has secured Planning permission in principal and a commercial deal with site owners was also completed. A North Clyde Riverbank NPF4 was submitted to Scottish Government.
- Carless site secured £2m from Clyde Mission Catalyst Fund to commence development of the Malin Group's Scottish Marine Technology Park.

Challenges in 2020/21

Along with the achievements noted above, there were significant challenges in 2020/21, not least the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 Pandemic

As with other Council services, the principle challenge over the last year has been the COVID-19 pandemic. Challenges faced were a mixture of: being at the forefront of the Council's response to the pandemic through Environmental Health in their public health roll and Registration; ensuring services continued safely during the pandemic; reacting to ever changing legislation and guidance, both in respect of assistance to local businesses (particularly through Trading Standards, Licensing and Environmental Health) and also in providing legal assistance and advice to other front line services, particularly, but far from exclusively, Education and Social Work, to enable services to continue and react to the changing environment; and ensuring the democratic process continued to operate when physical meetings were no longer possible. The pandemic led to a large number of construction contract disputes for COVID related delays which legal worked on. Planning for major civic events such as Remembrance Sunday and the 80th Anniversary of the Clydebank Blitz was extremely difficult due to the high level of uncertainty and risk associated with the organisation of such high profile events during a pandemic. There was also an increase in unauthorised development, which had to be addressed within existing resources. All services required to adapt quickly to these challenges, working from home (in the main) with minimal impact on the service provided both internally and externally.

Economic Development

The pandemic and phases of grant support have presented challenges in terms of staff resources and work styles and patterns. The Scottish Government has decided to provide additional resource to assist with the response to the pandemic recovery grant support process. The short notice from Scottish Government in establishing and delivering COVID business support grants into our communities was a significant challenge for the team. We received 500 applications in the first four days; our typical level of grants is about 100 per annum. The team pulled together additional service support in the immediate challenging period and the team rose to the challenge very well.

Other challenges have been in relation to the "normal" work of the Team which has inevitably had to take a lower priority in the face of the pandemic. Our track record of delivery, helping hundreds of business to start up and grow and delivering our mainstream business support grants, has demonstrated the effectiveness of the team in this regard.

Progressing our projects against the backdrop of COVID-19 has been the biggest challenge this last year not least due to the challenges of remote working. This particularly affected Clydebank Can on the Canal, the development of Alexandria masterplan and the Town Centre Fund building refurbishment projects in Alexandria

Continuing to support delivery and achieve Business Gateway targets in particular following the pandemic and delivering annual Business awards (tentatively moved to May 2021) and Business Week of events/workshops will stretch the team resources and the need to continue to carry out effective project planning will be important. Promoting our 'love local' campaign as the business community recovers from the pandemic and the economic challenges faced by our Town Centres will be significant.

Working from home

Services adapted to remote working during the pandemic whilst ensuring minimal disruption to services for citizens and businesses. Technology was quickly rolled out to support service delivery and staff worked throughout the changes to provide high quality public service in changing and challenging times. Staff have adapted to the changes, supported through remote technology and Corporate Workforce updates.

Priorities for 2021/22

Delivery of Key Regeneration Sites

The Exxon city region Deal project has a budget of £34.05m. The Missives governing the land transfer from ExxonMobil to the Council were concluded in September 2020 with the final business case due to be submitted in late 2021/22. Considering how the potential of this significant site can be realised within a wider North Clyde Riverbank plan is a priority for 2021/22. One of the key factors during 2021/22 is to resolve the sale of land with 3rd party land owners to allow the project to progress on programme.

From 2021/22, we will further develop the principles set out in the Council's North Clyde Riverbank NPF4 bid to Scottish Government, which elevates the Exxon and surrounding sites to a national development opportunity. North Clyde Riverbank is an ambitious long term vision to promote the redevelopment of our riverside sites from Clydebank to Dumbarton.

Commercial Opportunities

The regeneration team will seek to identify commercialisation opportunities for new development opportunities in conjunction with the private sector. We will seek to progress discussions with developers who may wish to enter a partnership with the Council to achieve joint benefits from a commercial, housing and low carbon perspective. The Regeneration Capital Fund with £12.77m and external funding of £2m will need to be allocated across a number of projects. The Fund's key operating principles and allocations to specific projects agreed by IRED Committee will be progressed.

During this period, development of projects includes those linked to the Carless site regeneration for a Marine Technology Park and importantly, the expansion of the District Heating Network to the Golden Jubilee Hospital and beyond. Mission Clyde is the Scottish Government's latest flagship infrastructure approach to Regeneration along the length of the River Clyde. West Dunbartonshire sits well in

term of potential areas for consideration of Mission Clyde funding going forward with sites such as Exxon project, Carless, the Golden Jubilee Hospital and Queens Quay already being seen as main contributors to the Mission. Officers have secured funding of £2m for the Carless site in partnership with the Malin group and Ceminal have secured £179k to develop their cement handling facility at Rothesay dock.

Supporting Business Recovery

Assisting town centres to recover from the pandemic will continue to be a focus in 2021/22, and we will prioritise support for High Street businesses. An unexpected benefit of the pandemic is people demanding more from their local areas and town centres, so we will continue to develop projects to make our town centres attractive places, and take advantage of further Town Centre Fund that may be provided by Scottish Government.

Underpinning the delivery of our Town Centre Recovery Plan and Masterplanning of Towns is the Scottish Government's policy driver on creating '20 minute neighbourhoods'. We will begin masterplanning Clydebank town centre including the redevelopment of the former Playdrome site, a transport hub at Clydebank Station, improved connections between the town centre and Queens Quay, and related community-led activity such as Clydebank Can on the Canal into a cohesive plan for Clydebank.

UN Climate Change Conference (also known as COP26)

The Council will progress our ambition to play a role in the November COP26 International Conference taking place in Glasgow in 2021. With our world class water sourced District Heating network at Queens Quay in Clydebank, we will seek to promote this carbon savings district heating system and support the Government and Council Climate Change Challenge. The newly established West Dunbartonshire Energy LLP will progress the district heating network at Queens Quay and the role that can be played at COP26.

Climate Change Strategy

To contribute towards meeting Scotland's national net zero target by 2045, the Council has developed a new 'Climate Change Strategy' as a route map for 2021/22 and beyond. Our vision is an overarching Strategy that will set the foundation for a plan of action and response to Scotland's Climate Emergency and 2045 net zero carbon reduction target. To deliver this strategy, the Council is currently developing a Climate Change Action Plan to ensure environmental actions are devolved to relevant service areas and Climate Change action is mainstreamed across council policies, operations and the wider public.

Queens Quay

Following completion of the Infrastructure works in 2020/21, the focus for the development will be securing housing developments across the site in partnership with site owner CRL Ltd. The site wide design code elements are complete and efforts to promote and market the plots will be critical to ensure the Council's

investment sees economic as well as commercial returns as per the development agreement.

Action Plan 2021/22

An action plan has been developed to take forward the priorities in 2021/22 (below). As well as actions, it comprises a range of performance indicators to enable progress to be monitored and reported to stakeholders and it considers the relevant risks. Progress will be monitored and managed on a regular basis and reported twice yearly to Committee, at mid-year and year end.

P A strong local economy and improved job opportunities

Ob A growing economy

Performance Indicator	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	Assigned To
	Value	Target	Value	Target	Target	
Number of businesses given advice and assistance to start up through Business Gateway	206	200	123	100	200	Gillian Scholes
No of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population	23.16	22.44	13.83	10.99	22	Gillian Scholes
Cost of Economic Development & Tourism per 1,000 population	242,427	150,000	Not yet available	150,000	150,000	Michael McGuinness
Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband	98.8%	100%	99.3%	100%	100%	Michael McGuinness
Town Vacancy Rates	14.83%	11.4%	Not yet available	11.4%	11.4%	Antony McGuinness
Immediately available employment land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes	43.63%	43.63%	43.63%	42.5%	42.5%	Antony McGuinness

Action	Start Date	Due Date	Assigned To
Deliver key regeneration sites across West Dunbartonshire	01-Apr-2021	31-Mar-2022	Michael McGuinness
Explore commercial opportunities in our town centres	01-Apr-2021	31-Mar-2022	Michael McGuinness
Deliver the Town Centre Recovery Plan	01-Apr-2021	31-Mar-2022	Michael McGuinness

Risk	Description	Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Assigned To
Failure to deliver Queens Quay Masterplan	Following completion of Council investment there is a risk the housing plot sales do not materialise in the next 3-7 years.			Michael McGuinness
Inability to meet demands of Council to progress regeneration projects within desired timescales	The number and complexity of regeneration projects is putting considerable strain on the resources available which can be exacerbated by delays out with the control of the service and when pinch points on different projects occur at roughly the same time.			Pamela Clifford; Alan Douglas; Michael McGuinness

P Supported individuals, families and carers living independently and with dignity

Ob More affordable and suitable housing options

Action	Start Date	Due Date	Assigned To
Ensure the next phase of Queens Quay Housing is delivered	01-Apr-2021	31-Mar-2022	Michael McGuinness

P Efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents

Ob Sustainable & attractive local communities

Performance Indicator	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	Assigned To
	Value	Target	Value	Target	Target	
Tonnage of carbon dioxide emissions from Council operations and assets	24,394	27,997	Not yet available	25,478	24,000	Adam Armour - Florence; Michael McGuinness

Action	Start Date	Due Date	Assigned To
Develop a Climate Change Action plan to support the implementation of the Climate Change Strategy and ensure it is devolved and mainstreamed	01-Apr-2021	31-Mar-2022	Michael McGuinness
Ensure Council has positioned the Energy Centre to showcase best practice at COP26	01-Apr-2021	31-Mar-2022	Michael McGuinness

Risk	Description	Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Assigned To
Exxon City Deal Project	There is a risk that the affordability of delivering the City Deal Exxon project is beyond the resources being made available from Glasgow City Region City Deal.			Michael McGuinness