
Report to: Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 21 October 2021

**Subject: Economic Development Update: Short term Action Plan
(Economic Development Service) and Employability Update**

Report by: Strategic Director (Place)

1.0 Purpose

1.1. The purpose of this report is to:

- Present a short term Action Plan of activity within the Economic Development team which will contribute to a wider Economic Recovery Plan for Clackmannanshire (to be prepared during 2022/23 (See Paragraph 3.1-3.3);
- Highlight new, and extensions to current, Employability programmes that the Council is being asked to deliver (See Paragraphs 3.4 to 3.14);
- To update on COVID business grants, including an update on the Discretionary Fund Phase 3. (See Paragraph 3.17);
- Highlight current Partnership working, and opportunities for collaborating with Falkirk and Stirling Councils where value could be added by working regionally. (See Paragraphs 3.18 – 3.25);
- Highlight some of the key challenges that will need to be considered in relation to the implementation and delivery of a range of new Employability programmes which will have capacity and resource implications for the Economic Development Team (See Paragraphs 3.26 – 3.31).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1. Council is invited to:

- Note and agree the Economic Development team short term Action Plan (attached as Appendix A to this report).
- Note the activities currently being undertaken within Economic Development, in particular the update to the range of current and new employability programmes delivered through Clackmannanshire Works;

- Note proposals for Young Persons Guarantee Activity 2021/22 (full detail at Appendix B to this report)
- Note the extension to the current European Social Fund (ESF) programme to end of March 2023, in line with the end of the Fair Start programme;
- Note the spend on the Discretionary Fund to date, and arrangements now in place for use of the underspend (Discretionary Fund Phase 3)
- Note the current Partnership working, and opportunities for and examples of Regional Working;
- Note the challenges faced by the Economic Development Team in terms of capacity and capabilities to be able to respond to the rapidly moving employability agenda and a changing set of immediate employability priorities for Local Government;
- Note that a team redesign is planned during the next 18 months in order to be able to respond to the new delivery model which will be required through No-one Left Behind, aligned to the end of our ESF and Fair Start programmes early in 2023.

3.0 Considerations

Economic Development Team: Short Term Action Plan

- 3.1 A short term action plan has been prepared which outlines the range of activities currently being undertaken within the Economic Development team which will contribute to a wider Economic Recovery plan. The draft Action Plan forms Appendix A of this report.
- 3.2 It is intended that a longer term Economic Strategy for the area will be prepared once Clackmannanshire Alliance's new Wellbeing Economy Local Outcomes Improvement Plan is in place.
- 3.3 It is recognised that Economic Development as a practice is far reaching and is carried out in the work of a wide range of Council services and of our partners. However, this Action Plan is focussed on the work carried out by the Economic Development Service of the Council.

Employability

- 3.4 At Council meeting of 10 December 2020, an Employability Update was presented to members. Given the fast moving nature of this area of work, it is considered that a further update on this work should be provided as part of this report.
- 3.5 The ESF programme has been re-profiled and extended to end of March 2023 to come in line with the end of the Fair Start Scotland programme. It is expected to deliver 90% of the original ESF target by the end of March 2023. This reduction on targets will result in a reduction of around £113k income to the Council over the 8 years of the programme, however, this is matched with a corresponding decrease in staff costs over the same period. Clacks Works

is working with over 250 clients on both Fair Start and ESF programmes on an annual basis. The UK Government has announced that a Shared Prosperity Fund will replace European Funds but detail around this, including who will deliver the new fund, has not yet been announced.

- 3.6 The annual Modern Apprenticeship contract with Skills Development Scotland for 2020/21 has been extended for existing apprentices only but the service will continue to support council services to recruit and train new apprentices.
- 3.7 The Parental Employability Support (PESF) will be continued for parents both in employment and not working, with additional funding this year for disabled parents. Total funding for PESF (including support for disabled parents) in 2021/22 is £214,000.
- 3.8 A delivery profile for No-One Left Behind (NOLB) is being developed. This will include a number of Fair Work Incentive places (an Employer Recruitment Incentive of up to £6,000 per person for over 25's) and continuation of the Jumpstart Employability Programme delivered by the Council's Community Learning & Development service.
- 3.9 The service continues to operationalise and deliver Scottish Government Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) funded programmes for 2020/21, funding for which was confirmed and received in late November 2020, as well as developing and submitting a Delivery Profile for YPG funding for 2021/22. YPG funding in 2020/21 for Clackmannanshire was £398,938, and for 2021/22 is £593,846. Breakdown of activities for YPG for both years is attached as Appendix B to this report.
- 3.10 The UK Government introduced the 'Kickstart' programme as part of its job support response. Given that applicants initially had to provide a minimum of 30 placements, Clackmannanshire Council Economic Development officers worked with Stirling and Falkirk Councils to submit a bid to act as a 'Gateway' for local employers wishing to take up Kickstart placements. The Clackmannanshire Works team is now administering over 50 local placements, including 21 within the Council's HR, Environment/Fleet/Roads/Land and Education Services.
- 3.11 Confirmation and detail of a new Job Creation Scheme for long term unemployed aged 25+, to be administered through Clackmannanshire Works is awaited. It is understood that the budget for Clackmannanshire for 2021/22 will be £140,000, its purpose being to create and fund a minimum of 14 jobs for 6 months in the public and third sectors.
- 3.12 The Clackmannanshire Council Fair Work Incentive has been revised in conjunction with Stirling Council to align with the new framework for public funded ERIs and will fund an employer recruitment incentive of between £2k-£6k for around 34 jobs in Clackmannanshire in 2021/22. This is being funded through a mix of Young Persons Guarantee and NOLB funding to ensure a Fair Work Incentive can be offered to employers taking on people with barriers to employment of any age.
- 3.13 Funding was awarded earlier this year from the Scottish Government to allow the Council to recruit a Business Engagement Officer for 12 months to support Partnership Action for Continued Employment (PACE) activity,

supporting businesses and employees who are facing redundancy situations. The post holder will be a Single Point of Contact for employers in Clackmannanshire, and will also play a role in liaising with businesses to promote employability programmes.

- 3.14 The Economic Development team are currently leading on a review of the work and strategic relationships of the Clackmannanshire Local Employability Partnership (LEP) in order to fulfil Scottish Government expectations of the enhanced role of LEPs in the delivery of No One Left Behind (NOLB). This includes production of an Action Plan, with partners committing to progressing several areas for improvement over the next 6 months in line with the NOLB critical path which has been issued by Scottish Government. The LEP includes representatives from DWP, Skills Development Scotland, Forth Valley College, CTSI, NHS Forth Valley, Developing the Young Workforce, and various Council services (i.e. Education, Economic Development, Criminal Justice). Membership has now been increased to include the local Business Gateway service and will be reviewed on an on-going basis.

Business Support and Funding

- 3.15 An amount of £36,000 which was underspent within the old Business Loans Scotland (BLS) fund has been returned to Clackmannanshire Council by BLS Scotland to be used to support strategy projects for business. Around 12 projects are being supported, with referrals being made through the Business Gateway growth adviser team.
- 3.16 Throughout the pandemic, the Economic Development Service has assisted in delivering various Scottish Government COVID business grants. To date the amount distributed to Clacks businesses totals around £15m.
- 3.17 ***Discretionary Fund: Phase 3***
- 3.17.1 In late 2020, Scottish Government announced the creation of a £30m Discretionary Fund to allow Local Authorities to mitigate the short-term financial challenge being experienced by businesses adversely impacted by COVID restrictions and regulations introduced since October 2020. Clackmannanshire Council's initial allocation was £155,000. Cross party agreement on a set of criteria was reached to provide grants of £2k to businesses for Phase 1 of the Discretionary Fund (DF).
- 3.17.2 During this initial phase, which opened on 1 February 2021, around 120 applications were received and due to the fund being heavily oversubscribed it was closed to new applications after one week.
- 3.17.3 On 10 February 2021 the Cabinet Secretary for Finance announced an increase to the Fund to £120m, with the allocation for Clackmannanshire being an additional £559,000.
- 3.17.4 The process of delivering the previously approved £2,000 Discretionary Fund grant in February 2021 allowed officers to assess the further business support funds released nationally, the needs of business, demand for the fund and to further identify those businesses that were continuing to fall through the gaps in COVID business support. Phase 2 of the Discretionary Fund opened mid March through to 31 March, with a further 80 applications being received.

3.17.5 Given the lower level of applications received in Phase 2 than had been anticipated, it was agreed in line with other Scottish local authorities to top up the original £2k grant to £4k for sole traders, to £6k for businesses employing 1-4 employees and to £8k for businesses employing 5 or more employees.

3.17.6 As at end of May 2021, 125 grants have been distributed, totalling £562,000, leaving an underspend of around £150,000.

3.17.7 Key findings around this fund are noted as:

- Applications for the Discretionary Fund Phase 2 were lower than anticipated.
- Very few applications have been received from those businesses with 10+ employees;
- Businesses in Clacks are still experiencing challenges, particularly those in the supply chain to hospitality and retail, tourism, transport, leisure and facilities management.
- Additional challenges for businesses being evidenced due to lack of income are costs associated with new ways of working, development of new processes to reflect new markets, upgrading systems to reflect new regulations and inability to diversify/implement change.

3.17.8 Taking all of the above into account, it is proposed to use the underspend on this fund to open a new Discretionary Fund Phase 3, to support local businesses with projects which will aid business recovery and growth, and to support some of the challenges outlined. Around 20 – 30 businesses will be supported with grants of between £5k and £10k and recipient businesses are being asked to commit to a small community benefit. This Phase of the Fund is being delivered in partnership with the Business Gateway team who are supporting the application process and providing business referrals. The application process is now open.

Partnership Working and Opportunities for Regional Working

3.18 The Clackmannanshire Business Support Partnership (CBSP) which was set up to ensure regular and relevant information flow to our business base throughout the pandemic, continues to meet on a regular basis to share information, collaborate and ensure that up to date content from each of the Partners is communicated to each other and to businesses through a monthly newsletter (initially weekly), and through regular individual Partner communications to businesses. Members of the CBSP include Clackmannanshire Council (Chair), Ceteris/Business Gateway, Forth Valley Chamber of Commerce, Alloa First, Clacks First, CTSI, Forth Valley College, Discover Clackmannanshire, Visit Scotland, Scottish Enterprise and Federation of Small Businesses. It is intended that the role of the CBSP will be formalised and the group will sit alongside the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) reporting into Clackmannanshire Alliance via the proposed Anchor Partnership.

3.19 The Council is now well represented on several local, regional and national groups, including the Board of Clacks First and Alloa First, the Executive Group of Discover Clackmannanshire, the Forth Valley and Lomond Leader Action Group (LAG), the national Supplier Development Programme group, and on several of the national SLAED groups including Employability and

Business Groups. Clackmannanshire Council has now also joined the Forth Valley Chamber on a 2 year membership basis.

- 3.20 Links with Ceteris/Business Gateway team are continually being improved and the Economic Development service is working in partnership with the Business Gateway team to deliver and fund strategic support to businesses, Phase 3 of the Discretionary Fund, and the start up grant element of the Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) funding.
- 3.21 Senior Economic Development Managers across the 3 Forth Valley Local Authorities are also working together to explore areas of mutual interest such as employability where value could be added by working regionally.
- 3.22 There are already areas of work that are delivered regionally. The three Forth Valley Local Authorities deliver the Fair Start Scotland service and the Business Gateway service is delivered on a regional basis. Regional working is also taking place across Stirling and Clackmannanshire for City Region Deal Skills & Inclusion programme and Digital Hub projects, and the Fair Work Incentive has been developed jointly between Stirling and Clackmannanshire.
- 3.23 The Economic Development Service engages with the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Employer Engagement Forum (EEF), and worked with colleagues in Falkirk and Stirling to deliver a successful regional Forth Valley Local Employability roundtable stakeholder event in August, attended by around 100 employability partner and provider organisations.
- 3.24 The Kickstart programme is a regional collaboration between the three Forth Valley Local Authorities, as has been the recent Supplier Development Programme Forth Valley Meet the Buyer event held on 30 June 2021 which was funded through the Regional Recovery Bid made by Clackmannanshire Council on behalf of all three areas.
- 3.25 The three Forth Valley Councils are in the early stages of forming a Regional Economic Partnership, the key output from which will be a Regional Economic Strategy which will have links to and be integrated with land use planning and transportation strategies at the regional level. This provides an opportunity to collaborate with our Forth Valley neighbours and to continue to access Scottish Government funds such as the Regional Recovery Fund.

Challenges

- 3.26 The service welcomes the additional support for employability, but is aware that the scale, pace, multiplicity and fluidity of the emerging new initiatives and funding opportunities presents a significant challenge for the Economic Development service to deliver within the current operating year given capacity limitations and the local labour market context. There is also the added uncertainty around the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund and who will deliver it. It is considered likely that the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) will be tasked with this and not the Council. The Place service is undergoing a redesign and as part of this process, there will be some changes in the Economic Development service in order to be able to respond to new challenges and changing priorities.

3.27 With regard to Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) and Parental Employability Support Funding (PESF) funding, there is a risk attached to the service's ability to spend the full allocation of this year's funding within required timescales, particularly as the Scottish Government has changed the funding and claim conditions for 2021/22. The 2021/22 YPG grant letters were issued on 29th June 2021 and the NOLB/PESF letters were issued on 3rd September 2021. The delay in the issue of these grant letters combined with the additional points outlined below are having a significant impact on the ability of the Council in collaboration with local partners to effectively plan, co-commission and deliver services. The main financial issues are summarised as:

- There was a significant level of carry forward of underspend as a result of Covid 19 and the understandable disruption to service delivery as well as the lateness of the YPG grant offer in 2020/21.
- Changes to the payment methods from quarterly grant claim on commitment to actual spend in arrears meaning that underspends (prepaid to Local Authorities) will have to be used up first via virtual claims prior to accessing 2021/22 allocations. There were significant levels of YPG carried forward as commitments.
- All 2021/22 expenditure for YPG, PESF and NOLB has a "hard stop" of 31 March 2022 with no forward commitment allowed with the exception of Employer Recruitment Incentives which will be honoured by Scottish Government from a 2022/23 budget allocation.

Full detail on our YPG proposals for both 20/21 and 21/22 are attached at Appendix B and this also highlights areas of spend which are at risk.

3.28 It is intended to recruit 2 additional full-time members of staff, as well as the PACE position mentioned above. One position is a key worker for the Fair Start Scotland programme to help deliver challenging targets for the remaining 18 months of the programme, and the other is to replace a post holder who retired earlier this year, working across the various programmes to support delivery and achievement of outcomes. Filling these positions will help ensure we have resource to deliver the additional programmes and the challenging targets set by existing programme funders.

3.29 Recruitment has been completed for the new Business Engagement Officer (PACE) post with a start date of October, later than was originally hoped. There has been no confirmation from Scottish Government as to whether this funding can be carried forward into next financial year so this post has been filled for a 6 month fixed term only. There is therefore a risk that 50% of the approved funding allocation of £71,000 will not be able to be used.

3.30 It is intended to start the recruitment process for a permanent full time resource to co-ordinate and manage both the LEP action planning and commissioning activity and the YPG project activity. This is new activity for us and is required in order for us to fulfil our remit in terms of the Government framework for the LEP and substantial additional activity on YPG.

3.31 It is clear that there has been a substantial increase in the number of programmes to be delivered, along with increased funding and monitoring and reporting requirements. Whilst the service is able to recruit to operational posts to support delivery through additional funding, the number of officers

carrying out policy, compliance and management functions has not increased. This presents a significant risk, particularly around capacity for operational management and compliance. This risk will continue to be monitored and will form part of the considerations for service redesign.

4.0 Sustainability Implications

5.0 Resource Implications

- 5.1. There are resource implications resulting from the need to develop and implement new initiatives and realign current services to meet changing priorities at a local level. There will be additional staff resource required to deliver new initiatives – see 3.28 to 3.30 above and Staffing below (5.5).
- 5.2. *Financial Details*
- 5.3. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate.
- 5.4. Finance has been consulted and has agreed the financial implications as set out in the report.
- 5.5. *Staffing*
- 5.6 The contracts of the staff involved in the delivery of the Fair Start programme have been extended in line with the programme extension. One further full-time key worker requires to be recruited to support delivery of challenging targets on this programme.
- 5.7 We have engaged a Business Engagement Officer to carry out PACE activity across Clackmannanshire (12 month funded position from Scottish Government, but no confirmation yet that this can be carried forward into 2022/23, leaving a risk that this may only be able to be funded for 6 months.
- 5.8 The service will also recruit to replace a colleague who retired late last year to work across all employability programmes.
- 5.9 The service will also recruit a senior position to carry out work required for LEP action planning and commissioning of employability services from April 2022, as well as YPG co-ordination and project management.

6.0 Exempt Reports

- 6.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

- Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all X
- Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life X
- Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential X
- Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish X

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

8.0 Equalities Impact

- 8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?
Yes No

9.0 Legality

- 9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

10.0 Appendices

- 10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix A – Economic Recovery Plan July 2021
Appendix B - Proposal for Discretionary Fund (Phase 3)

11.0 Background Papers

- 11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)
Yes (please list the documents below) No

Author(s)

NAME	DESIGNATION	TEL NO / EXTENSION
Alison Davidson	Team Leader, Economic Development	07790 942237
Debbie Carter	Economic Development Strategy Officer	

Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Pete Leonard	Strategic Director (Place)	

APPENDIX A: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

The following tables set out specific actions the Economic Development Service will be engaged in during the current financial year and, in some cases, beyond.

ACTIONS RELATING TO POLICY & STRATEGY

Actions the Economic Development Service will take to develop and deliver against strategic objectives for the delivery of Community Wealth Building (CWB) and the delivery of a wellbeing economy for Clackmannanshire.

Activity	Intended Benefits	Strategic Area	Timescale
Support the creation of an Anchor Partnership as part of a restructured Alliance.	A structure in place to deliver Community Wealth Building approaches across the area.	Community Wealth Building	Short
Collaborate with Partnership & Performance Directorate on the development of a wellbeing economy LOIP and the associated restructure of the LEP.	Cement the stated ambitions of the Council & Alliance into partnership action with structures designed to enable delivery.	Wellbeing Economy CWB	Short
Collaborate with SMT to ensure CWB actions are embedded into directorate action plans.	Ensure wider ownership of responsibilities for Community Wealth Building to maximise outcomes.	Wellbeing Economy CWB Be the Future	Short
Collaborate with the Be the Future Communications & Engagement Group to develop a communications strategy for CWB and Wellbeing Economy.	Wide understanding of CWB and the wellbeing economy to support shared understanding and commitment across all stakeholders.	Wellbeing Economy CWB Be the Future	Medium
Chair and lead the Local Employability Partnership in line with new framework guidance from Scottish Government on the role of the LEP in the future provision of No One Left Behind (NOLB)	Maximisation of employability outcomes for local residents.	Wellbeing Economy CWB Economic Recovery	Short - Medium

Activity	Intended Benefits	Strategic Area	Timescale
Chairing the Clackmannanshire Business Support Partnership and developing a shared action plan to deliver economic recovery and Wellbeing Economy ambitions.	Maximising opportunities for business support.	Wellbeing Economy CWB Economic Recovery	Short-medium
Chair the Mental Health in Young People workstream which is part of the Council's wider Mental Health Transformation Project for Children, Young People & Families.	Maximisation of employability and mental health outcomes for young people.	Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery	Ongoing
Attend meetings of the Tackling Poverty Partnership and Digital Inclusion Sub Group, contribute to the work of this Partnership including delivery of the Child Poverty Action Plan.	Maximise employability outcomes for those facing poverty.	Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery	Ongoing

ACTIONS RELATING TO WORKING WITH RESIDENTS

Actions to develop employability & skills and support the delivery of fair work

Activity	Intended Benefits	Strategic Area	Timescale
Support the Council's HR service and wider anchor partnership with the development of a Good Employment Charter. (To be rolled out more widely next year).	Improved fair work outcomes for Alliance partner employees.	Community Wealth Building Wellbeing Economy Fair Work	Short-Medium
Continue delivery of both ESF and Fair Start programmes until March 2023.	Maximise employability outcomes for residents facing barriers to exclusion. Currently 258 residents being supported by both programmes.	Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery	Ongoing to March 23
CRD Skills and Inclusion	Maximise skills, training & employment outcomes of the Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal	Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery City Region Deal Net Zero	Project approval Autumn 21 Delivery to 2026
Continue and expand Parental Employability Support fund (PESF) and additional funding for disabled parents (DPES) to support disabled parents both in employment and not working.	Improved labour market outcomes for disabled people. Currently 42 parents being supported through PESF.	Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery Fair Work	To March 22
Deliver agreed contract for the UK Government's Kickstart programme with wrap around support through the Youth Guarantee Programme.	52 young people benefit from six months employment and work experience. Additional support for local employers	Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery Fair Work	To March 22
Working with Stirling Council to agree a revised Fair Work Incentive Programme in line with new framework for public funded ERIs.	38 residents supported into jobs with Fair Work Incentive funding. Additional support for local employers	Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery Fair Work	To March 22

Activity	Intended Benefits	Strategic Area	Timescale
Continue to operationalise and deliver Young Person's Guarantee funding for 2020/21 and confirm plans for 2021/22. (See Appendix 1 for detail of 20/21 and proposals for 2021/22.)	<p>Local young people benefit from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermediate Labour Market environmental & digital Jobs • Wrap around support for Kickstart to ensure payment of the Real Living Wage • Placements with local employers who were not successful within the Kickstart bid. • Additional digital skills support • Additional digital based mental health support • Extension of Community Jobs Scotland placements 	<p>Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery Fair Work Net Zero</p>	To March 22
Lead the development and submission of a delivery profile for No-one Left Behind NOLB funding for 2021/22.	<p>Provision of funding (for example) for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Work Incentive places • Jumpstart Employability Programme for 16-19 year olds. 	<p>Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery Fair Work Net Zero</p>	To March 22
Develop and deliver the Job Creation Scheme for long term unemployed people aged 25+.	A minimum of 14 residents benefit from 6 month job placements.	<p>Economic Recovery Fair Work</p>	To March 22
Continue to deliver Modern Apprenticeship contract with Skills Development Scotland for existing apprentices and support Council services to recruit and train new apprentices.	Opportunities for apprenticeships within the Council are maximised.	Wellbeing Economy	To March 22

Activity	Intended Benefits	Strategic Area	Timescale
<p>Involvement with strategic and operational partnerships including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLAED Employability Group • NOLB Shared Measurement Framework Group (Local Authority Lead) • Data & Reporting Group (Local Authority Lead) • Data & Reporting Group • SLAED Performance Group <p>Regional Skills Assessment (RSA) Steering Group</p>	<p>The Council is well represented at strategic groups and officers are not only well-informed of national policy but have the opportunity to shape national policy and processes.</p>	<p>Wellbeing Economy Fair Work</p>	

ACTIONS RELATING TO SUPPORTING OUR PLACE

Actions to support businesses and the development of place based elements of a wellbeing economy and a just transition to net zero.

Activity	Intended Benefits	Strategic Themes	Timescale
<p>Leading action to develop Clackmannanshire as a community wealth building place.</p>	<p>Improved use of procurement as an economic development tool through the use of both local and regional suppliers and community benefits.</p> <p>Delivery of an anchor partnership Good Employment Charter.</p>	<p>Community Wealth Building Wellbeing Economy Economic Recovery Fair Work</p>	<p>Year 1 of 3</p>

Activity	Intended Benefits	Strategic Themes	Timescale
Collaborate in the development of the Regional Economic Strategy and continue to use this work to access Regional funds.	<p>Delivery of a Regional Economic Strategy focussed on agreed themes. Key links to land use planning and transportation strategies at a regional level</p> <p>Integration of the Clackmannanshire perspective in regional approaches.</p> <p>Greater collaborative opportunities.</p> <p>Ability to source Regional funds such as Scottish Government's Regional Recovery Fund.</p>	<p>Wellbeing Economy</p> <p>Economic Recovery</p> <p>Net Zero</p> <p>Transport</p>	Short - Medium
Progress development work for the City Region Deal Digital Hub project.	Allows for the development and approval of the regional OBC.	City Region Deal	Medium
Progress development work for the City Region Deal Culture, Heritage & Tourism project.	Allows for the development and approval of the regional OBC.	City Region Deal Net Zero	Medium
Working across Council departments and partner agencies to coordinate bids to the Community Renewal Fund.	UKG Funding opportunities are maximised. 4 Bids submitted and outcomes awaited.		Complete
Using money returned to Council from the old Business Loans Scotland fund (£36,000) to deliver Clackmannanshire Strategy Support for Businesses.	Around 12 Clackmannanshire businesses are provided support for growth strategy projects.	Wellbeing Economy	Short to medium
Using underspend on discretionary fund (£140,000) to offer a Phase 3 grant scheme 'Clackmannanshire Business Adaptation and Growth Grant Fund ¹ ' to businesses for projects.	Local businesses supported with premises adaptation, new ways of working and growth projects to support business recovery from COVID.	Economic Recovery Net Zero	To March 22

Activity	Intended Benefits	Strategic Themes	Timescale
Recruitment of a 6month fixed term Business Engagement Officer. (The position was funded for 12 months by Scot Gov. but recruitment processes mean only 6 month post can be confirmed to end March 22)	Additional resource is secured to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support PACE activity • Be a first point of contact for businesses – providing business advice and signposting to other support • Improve employer engagement with Clackmannanshire Works • Support marketing, communications and networking activity with businesses 	Economic recovery	Short
Review systems and processes which have been developed for administration of COVID Business Grant funding	Ensure the service is able to respond quickly to further potential funding streams in the event of further restrictions/support.	Economic Recovery	Short
Continue to sit on the Executive Group of Discover Clacks (the local tourism group). Supporting funding applications such as those to Visit Scotland and providing the secretariat.	The service has increased support to the local tourism sector.	Economic Recovery Wellbeing Economy	Ongoing
Represent Economic Development at Board level on the Clacks First group. Engaging on BID fund applications, BID activity and priorities, listening to views of the businesses within the BID area.	Improved engagement with business representative groups.	Economic Recovery Wellbeing Economy	Ongoing
Management of the Business Gateway Contract with Ceteris and ongoing operational relationship	Role of Business Gateway is maximised.	Economic Recovery Wellbeing Economy	Ongoing

Activity	Intended Benefits	Strategic Themes	Timescale
Liaison with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTSI • Forth Valley Chamber of Commerce • Alloa First 	Membership benefits from FV Chamber of Commerce (committed to 2 year membership). Integrated approaches to supporting social enterprise. Improved engagement with business representative groups.	Economic Recovery CWB Wellbeing Economy	Ongoing
Involvement with strategic and operational partnerships including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer Engagement Forum (Stirling and Clacks) • SLAED Business Group • Forth Valley PACE Partnership • SLAED Place & Wellbeing Group 	The Council is well represented at strategic groups and officers are not only well-informed of national policy but have the opportunity to shape national policy and processes.		
Membership of the Forth Valley and Lomond Leader Local Action (LAG) group.	Input into new funding bid which is being made by the LAG for funding to support community and business activity through to end March 2022.		Short

Background

Commitment

The Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) commits to guaranteeing within 2 years every young person aged between 16 and 24 locally either the opportunity to study at university or college, take part in an apprenticeship programme, take up a job or work experience, or participate in formal volunteering or training programme according to their own personal circumstances.

Funding 2020/21

£30 million of funding was allocated to Local Government for YPG in 2020/21¹. Clackmannanshire's share of this funding for 2020/21 was £398,938 (grant offer received in November 2020 with funding to be committed by 31st March 2021).

Guarantee Group

- Young people entitled to support through the guarantee are those aged 16-24 who are:
- Unemployed (excluding those in full time education)
- About to leave school without a positive destination
- School leavers without a positive destination
- In low paid employment
- At risk of redundancy
- At risk of losing an apprenticeship
- Leaving training, volunteering, college or university without a positive destination
- Low skilled
- Without qualifications at SCQF 5 or above
- Underemployed

Specific priority will be given to those most at risk with multiple barriers to employment to help support their engagement, participation and progression.

Approach

Scottish Government Grant offers were awarded in November 2020 and Local Authorities were asked to submit proposals by the end of November 2020 on how they planned to spend the funding at a local level to support outcomes for young people. A condition of the funding was that it needs to be spent or committed in the financial year to end March 2021. This has had a bearing on the interventions that we have or are in the process of putting in place.

¹ YPG Funding has also been allocated to Colleges.

YPG Opportunities 2020/21

The funding was utilised to support the following interventions:

1. The creation of new and exciting digital and environmental Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) opportunities paid at the Living Wage for 12 months which were linked to community wealth building and community benefits. We created 8 opportunities.
 - 2 Project Support Officers (Active Travel and Wood & Food Re-use) with Forth Environment Link
 - 3 Digital Support (Education) roles with The Tablet Academy
 - 2 Community Digital Support roles with Co.Lab
 - 1 Project Support role with The Rivers Trust in partnership with Clackmannanshire Council to support flood management work on the River Devon.
2. Wrap around support to the UK Government's Kickstart scheme. Clackmannanshire Council along with Falkirk and Stirling Councils successfully bid to the Department for Work & Pensions to become a gateway for Kickstart to enable local businesses to take advantage of this scheme to create 6 month job placements for 18 – 24 year olds. YPG funding was used to top up young people's wages from NMW to the Living Wage and contribute towards some of the staff costs required to support the administration and delivery of this scheme locally.
3. Funding of wage costs for 6 month job placements for employers who were not approved as part of our gateway bid. These placements were also available to young people under 25 including 16/17 year olds who are not currently eligible for Kickstart.
4. Digital Support – a service to help young people access digital devices, the internet and digital support was procured from CTSI.
5. Mental Health Support – a 24/7 web-based self-management service to support young people manage mild to moderate mental health difficulties was procured. This forms part of the Transforming Mental Health for Children, Young People and Families in Clackmannanshire project that is being led by the Council's Psychological Service.
6. Extension to Community Jobs Scotland (CJS) placements – CJS is a national scheme administered by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations to support job placements in the third sector for vulnerable young people. YPG funding is being used to extend some placements locally to 12 months instead of 6 months.

It should be noted that the above interventions are in addition to the wide range of employability services which are currently available to young people through Clackmannanshire Works and the Council's Education CLD team.

YPG Opportunities 2021/22

The Grant offer letter was received in July 2021 with an increased level of funding for this year at a level of £593,846. Our proposals were confirmed to Scottish Government at end of July 2021 and currently include:

- Employer Recruitment Incentive (ERI) places (our Fair Work Incentive) of up to £6,000 per participant
- Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) opportunities in the third and public sectors, linked to community wealth building ambitions, which will provide jobs with vocational training for 12 months.
- A Start-up grant of £5,000 per participant to support young people to become self-employed
- A Care Leavers project (Voice & Opportunity) to find out what care leavers think of services locally and involve them in shaping future services
- Digital mental health support for all young people aged 16 -24
- A contribution towards the running costs of the Jumpstart Employability Programme
- A Partner Fund for local partners to be bid into to provide additional services/interventions for specific groups of young people to be identified by the LEP
- LEP/YPG Co-ordination to build capacity within the local partnership to improve local partnership working and co-ordinate delivery and promotion of YPG activities
- Key Working and administrative support in relation to administration and workforce capacity in providing support to eligible young people

Challenges

- Due the late award of last year's funding, we are still in the process of delivering interventions approved last year which we will be incurring expenditure for up until the end of March 2022. This will make it extremely challenging to spend this year's YPG funding as we need to fully spend our YPG allocation for last year first.
- The limitations placed on carry forward of funding into 2022/23 have had a bearing on what we have put in our YPG proposal and will make it difficult for us to procure any new services due to the time it takes for the procurement process.
- Additional resource within the Employability team to manage, administer and report on additional programmes and funding is essential, but again, with limitations placed on carry forward of funding and timescales for recruitment, this will present a significant challenge to the team.

