



Stirling &
Clackmannanshire
City Region Deal

NOTICE OF MEETING & AGENDA

Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee

Thursday 19 June 2025 at 2:30pm

This meeting will be held in the Council Chambers, Old Viewforth, Stirling, FK8 2ET with remote participation also available via MS Teams.

The meeting will be broadcast live at: <https://stirling.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

A recording of the meeting will also be made available following the meeting.

Neil Harman, Head of Regional Programme Management Office

City Region Deal Regional Programme Management Office | Old Viewforth | Stirling FK8 2ET |

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AGENDA		Page Nos.
1.0	Apologies and substitutions	-
2.0	Declaration of interests Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.	-
3.0	Urgent business	-
4.0	<i>Previous minutes</i>	
4.1	Minutes of the Meeting of the Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee – 27 March 2025 (Copy attached)	1 – 3
5.0	<i>Items for consideration</i>	
5.1	Clackmannanshire Lone Parent Programme – Business Justification Case <i>Report by Strategic Director Place, Clackmannanshire Council</i> (Copy attached)	4 – 62
5.2	Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal – Annual Report 2024-2025 <i>Report by Head of Regional Programme Management Office</i> (Copy attached)	63 – 135
5.3	CRD Internal Audit Report – Schedule Update <i>Report by Interim Chief Executive, Stirling Council</i> (Copy attached)	136 – 139



Stirling &
Clackmannanshire
City Region Deal

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Stirling &
Clackmannanshire
City Region Deal

Joint Committee Membership

**Clackmannanshire Council
(Vice-Chair)**

Councillor Ellen Forson

**Stirling Council
(Chair)**

Councillor Gerry McGarvey

University of Stirling

Mr Graeme Duff

Clackmannanshire Council

Councillor Martha Benny

Stirling Council

Councillor Neil Benny

University of Stirling

Ms Eileen Schofield

Clackmannanshire Council

Councillor Janine Rennie

Stirling Council

Councillor Susan McGill

University of Stirling

Professor Leigh Sparks

Substitutes (appointed by Council)

Clackmannanshire Council:

Councillor Denis Coyne

Councillor Graham Lindsay

Councillor Kenneth Earle

Stirling Council:

Councillor Jen Preston

Councillor Elaine Watterson

Councillor Jim Thomson

If a Member who is a representative of the University of Stirling is unable to attend a meeting of the Joint Committee that Member may arrange for a substitute representative of the University of Stirling to attend.



Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal

City Region Deal Joint Committee – 19 June 2025

Agenda Item 4.1

MINUTES

MINUTES of MEETING of the STIRLING AND CLACKMANNANSHIRE CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS, KILNCRAIGS, ALLOA and by MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2025 at 2.30 pm

Present

Councillor Ellen Forson, Clackmannanshire Council (Chair)
Councillor Neil Benny, Stirling Council (Via Teams)
Councillor Martha Benny, Clackmannanshire Council (Via Teams)
Graeme Duff, University of Stirling (Via Teams)
Councillor Kenneth Earle (Via Teams (S))
Professor Leigh Sparks, University of Stirling (Via Teams)
Councillor Gerry McGarvey, Stirling Council
Eileen Schofield, University of Stirling (Via Teams)

In Attendance

Caroline Sinclair, Chief Executive, Stirling Council
Nikki Bridle, Chief Executive, Clackmannanshire Council
Sally Dimeo, Chief Finance Officer, University of Stirling (Via Teams)
Lindsay Sim, Chief Finance Officer, Clackmannanshire Council (Via Teams)
John Craig, Head of the City Region and Growth Deal Programme, University of Stirling (Via Teams)
Professor Iain Docherty, University of Stirling, Chair of Regional Economic Advisory Group
Emma Fyvie, Head of Economic Development, Planning & Climate Change, Stirling Council
Kevin Wells, Strategic Director, Clackmannanshire Council
Brian Roberts, Chief Operating Officer- Infrastructure & Environment, Stirling Council
Kelly Mathewson, Economic Development Project Manager, Stirling Council
Lena Schelling, Programme Officer/Analyst, Regional Programme Management Office
Mark Henderson, Communications, Stirling Council (Via Teams)
Helena Arthur, Solicitor, Legal and Governance, Clackmannanshire Council (Depute Clerk)
Sarah Goldberg, Team Leader, Legal and Governance, Clackmannanshire Council (Via Teams)
Melanie Moore, Committee Services, Clackmannanshire Council
Gillian White, Committee Services, Clackmannanshire Council



Recording of Meeting started

Prior to the start of the meeting, Councillor Forson, as Chair of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee, welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was advised that the meeting was being broadcast live via Clackmannanshire Council's website and that a recording of the meeting would also be made publicly available on the website following the meeting.

CRD45 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Janine Rennie, Clackmannanshire Council, submitted her apologies and Councillor Kenneth Earle attended as substitute for Councillor Rennie.

CRD46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CRD47 URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business brought forward.

CRD37 MINUTES – STIRLING & CLACKMANNANSHIRE CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE – 31 OCTOBER 2024

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee held on 31 October 2024 were submitted for approval.

Decision

The Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of 31 October 2024 as an accurate record of proceedings.

EXEMPT ITEM

The Joint Committee resolved in terms of Section 50(a) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as detailed in Schedule 7A, Part 1, Paragraph 9.

CRD38 STIRLING DIGITAL HUB

The purpose of the report, submitted by Kelly Mathewson, Economic Development Project Manager, Stirling Council, presented for review and approval, the Stirling Digital Hub Business Justification Case ("BJC") found at Appendix 1. The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee (the "Joint Committee") has been delegated power by both Councils to make decisions on project business cases within the City Region Deal remit.



The BJC sought approval for up to £2 million of City Region Deal ("CRD") funding to develop the Stirling Digital Hub (the "Hub"). The Hub aims to build on the local successes in the digital sector, and to support and enable the further growth of local digital companies, while attracting inward investment opportunities.

The BJC presented the strategic, economic, commercial, financial and management cases for the Hub. The BJC has been reviewed by Scottish Government which has provided a letter of comfort that the BJC will be approved when tenders are returned, and final costs are known. The letter of comfort was attached as appendix 2.

Approval of the BJC by Joint Committee will be followed by a report to Stirling Council's Finance, Economy and Corporate Services Committee seeking approval to procure the works. It is expected works will be completed by the end of 2025.

Decision

Having considered the report and having had the opportunity to ask questions, the Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee agreed to:-

1. Approve the Stirling Digital Hub Business Justification Case; and
2. Note that following approval of the business case, a report will be taken to Stirling Council's Finance, Economy and Corporate Resources Committee in April, seeking approval to commence the procurement process.

Action

Kelly Mathewson, Economic Development Project Manager, Stirling Council

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 3.04 pm



REPORT

Joint Committee 19th June 2025

Agenda Item 5.1

Clackmannanshire Lone Parent Programme Business Justification Case

Executive summary

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Document set out a commitment of up to £100k from UK Government via the Department for Work and Pensions, to build on the work of the Clackmannanshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. The fund was to target lone parents living in Alloa South & East and provide them with employability related support. This Business Justification Case (BJC) sets out the case for investment and seeks to secure £100k of revenue funding through the City Region Deal to improve employment and skill related outcomes for lone parents in Alloa South & East.

City Region Deal funding will be used to create a paid placement and training programme for lone parents who live in the Alloa South & East area of Clackmannanshire with dependent children under the age of 18 years. The programme will improve the qualification levels of lone parents giving them skills needed within the local labour market and address gaps in their employment history.

Feedback received from Scottish Government on the 11th June confirms they are supportive of the latest version of the submitted Business Justification Case and are content to endorse this subject to UK Government approval and provided a clean copy incorporating all feedback is returned for audit purposes.

Alison Davidson, Team Leader Economic Development, Clackmannanshire Council

Email address: adavidson@clacks.gov.uk Telephone number: 07790942237

Lena Schelling, Senior Programme Manager, RPMO

Email address: schellingl@stirling.gov.uk Telephone number: 01786 233422



Recommendations

Joint Committee is asked to:

1. Approve the Clackmannanshire Lone Parent BJC which seeks £100,000 funding from the UK Government's Department for Work & pensions (DWP) to deliver the project, subject to final endorsement by Scottish Government and approval by UK Government.

Implications

The proposed investment will enable Clackmannanshire Council to assist a minimum of 9 lone parents in Alloa South & East to improve their work-related qualifications, knowledge and experience.

Legal & Risk Implications and Mitigation

All Risks are captured in Appendix 6 Risk Register

Background

UK employment rates for lone parents are significantly less than for two parent households and at a local level almost a third of children in Clackmannanshire are in workless households, the third highest rate in Scotland. Over the past 4 years, there has been a significant growth in the number of lone parents claiming Universal Credit across Clackmannanshire with the greatest number residing in the Alloa South and East area.¹

City Region Deal funding will be used to create a paid placement and training programme for lone parents who live in the Alloa South & East area of Clackmannanshire with dependent children under the age of 18 years. The programme will improve the qualification levels of lone parents giving them skills needed within the local labour market and address gaps in their employment history.

Clackmannanshire Council will lead the delivery of this programme which has been modelled on successful employability pathways programmes delivered within Clackmannanshire, Forth Valley and Glasgow. Participants will be matched with local employers offering part time paid placements for up to 6 months across a range of settings and occupations to meet the needs of local businesses. An industry related training plan will be completed with vital key work support and after care provided by Clackmannanshire Council.



A proposal for the Lone Parent Programme has been progressed with the project funders since early 2024 leading to the BJC development commencing in early 2025. BJC V0.2 was submitted to Scottish and UK Government in April 2025. Various comments from different parties have subsequently been incorporated into V0.3 which has been resubmitted in May 2025 and awaits final approval, early feedback from Government has been that they are broadly content with the BJC and are completing final crosschecks. It is anticipated that this will be granted full endorsement by both Governments.

Considerations

In looking at the Lone Parent Programme, we are considering the following:

- The programme has taken into consideration the barriers faced by lone parents and has been designed to integrate into the existing employability system within Clackmannanshire. It will address a gap within current provision enabling a targeted and enhanced offer for lone parents. The fund will be used to fully cover employer related costs relating to LPP participants and fund agreed industry training and qualifications.
- The programme is aligned to the Council’s organisational objectives as set out in the Wellbeing Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, contributes to the Scottish Government’s National Strategy for Economic Transformation and supports the UK’s ambition to achieve 80% employment.

Resource Implications

Financial Details

The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report.
This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes ✓

Finance Officers have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes ✓

Staffing

The full implications on staffing are set out in the report. Yes ✓

Exempt Reports

Is this report exempt? No ✓

Equalities Impact

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



Legality

It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Joint Committee is acting within its legal powers.

Yes ✓

Sustainability and Environmental

It has been confirmed that sustainability and environmental issues have been considered within the report.

Yes ✓

Policy Implications

None

Consultations

As indicated in the Business Justification Case, the LPP was co-designed by both internal and external stakeholders. Lone parents were included in the service design process to learn from their experiences, identify what was preventing them from accessing employment and to better understand what had led to breakdowns in previous employment.

Background Papers

Have you used other documents to compile your report?

Yes ✓

The following employability pathway programmes were reviewed with the LPP adopting key findings and success factors.

1. Childcare Pathway, Clackmannanshire Council
2. NHS Demonstrator, Forth Valley
3. Lone Parent Pathway, Public Health Scotland and One Parent Families Scotland, Glasgow



Appendices

Please list any appendices attached to this report.

Appendix A. Business Justification Case

Appendix 1. Alloa South & East geography and eligible post codes

Appendix 2. Service design – lessons learned

Appendix 3. LPP Employer Agreement

Appendix 4. Strategic alignment

Appendix 5. LPP Logic Model

Appendix 6. Risk Register

Appendix 7. Participation and cost scenarios

Appendix 8. LPP roles and responsibilities (delivery)

Appendix 9. Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment

Appendix 10. Fair Work Exception Request

Approved by:

Kevin Wells, Strategic Director Place, Clackmannanshire Council 11.06.2025



PROJECT NAME: Clackmannanshire Lone Parent Programme

Business Justification Case

SRO:	Kevin Wells, Strategic Director of Place
Project Manager:	Alison Davidson, Economic Development
Organisation:	Clackmannanshire Council

	Name	Version	Date
Prepared by:	Emma MacGregor	0.4	06.06.25
Reviewed by:	Alison Davidson	0.4	06.06.25
Approved by:	Kevin Wells	0.4	06.06.25



Contents

1. Executive summary1

2. Strategic case2

3. Economic case.....17

4. Commercial case24

5. Financial case25

6. Management Case27

Appendices

Appendix 1 Alloa South & East geography and eligible post codes

Appendix 2 Service design – lessons learned

Appendix 3 LPP Employer Agreement

Appendix 4 Strategic alignment

Appendix 5 LPP Logic Model

Appendix 6 Risk Register

Appendix 7 Participation and cost scenarios

Appendix 8 LPP roles and responsibilities (delivery)

Appendix 9 Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment

Appendix 10 Fair Work Exception Request

1. Executive summary

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal [Document](#) set out a commitment of up to £100k from UK Government via the Department for Work and Pensions, to build on the work of the Clackmannanshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. The fund was to target lone parents living in Alloa South & East and provide them with employability related support.

This Business Justification Case sets out the case for investment and seeks to secure £100k of revenue funding through the City Region Deal to improve employment and skill related outcomes for lone parents in Alloa South & East.

The proposed investment will enable Clackmannanshire Council to assist a minimum of 9 lone parents in Alloa South & East to improve their work-related qualifications, knowledge and experience. The proposed investment has a Net Present Social Value of £159,500 and Benefit to Cost Ratio of 2.42.

The proposal detailed in this Business Justification Case will complement the Scottish Government's Parental Employability Support investment in Clackmannanshire enhancing the opportunities for lone parents without risk of duplication.

UK employment rates for lone parents are significantly less than for two parent households and at a local level almost a third of children in Clackmannanshire are in workless households, the third highest rate in Scotland. Over the past 4 years, there has been a significant growth in the number of lone parents claiming Universal Credit across Clackmannanshire with the greatest number residing in the Alloa South and East area.¹

City Region Deal funding will be used to create a paid placement and training programme for lone parents who live in the Alloa South & East area of Clackmannanshire with dependent children under the age of 18 years. The programme will improve the qualification levels of lone parents giving them skills needed within the local labour market and address gaps in their employment history.

Clackmannanshire Council will lead the delivery of this programme which has been modelled on successful employability pathways programmes delivered within Clackmannanshire, Forth Valley and Glasgow. Participants will be matched with local employers offering part time paid placements for up to 6 months across a range of settings and occupations to meet the needs of local businesses. An industry related training plan will be completed with vital key work support and after care provided by Clackmannanshire Council.

The programme has taken into consideration the barriers faced by lone parents and has been designed to integrate into the existing employability system within Clackmannanshire. It will address a gap within current provision enabling a targeted and enhanced offer for lone parents. The fund will be used to fully cover employer related costs relating to LPP participants and fund agreed industry training and qualifications.

The programme is aligned to the Council's organisational objectives as set out in the Wellbeing Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, contributes to the Scottish Government's National Strategy for Economic Transformation and supports the UK's ambition to achieve 80% employment.

¹ [People Community Wellbeing Plan 2024-2025](#), Clackmannanshire Council, August 2024.

It will be heavily supported by the existing Clackmannanshire Council employability service, Clacks Works, and create a supportive pathway for lone parents to progress from unemployment into longer term, higher skilled and sustainable employment.

2. Strategic case

2.1 The case for change

There has been significant growth (41%) of the number of lone parents claiming Universal Credit across Clackmannanshire over the past 4 years with the greatest number of lone parents residing in the Alloa South and East area.²

Lone parents are at a higher risk of poverty, in-work poverty, food and financial insecurity³ and are less likely to report being in 'very good' or 'good' general health.⁴ Children born to parents living in poverty are more likely to experience poor health later in life, are more likely to have poor mental health and are at higher risk of psychological distress.⁵ As reported by Public Health Scotland, paid employment has the potential to improve health and reduce health inequalities by providing higher incomes and meeting social and psychological needs.⁶

Lone parents who wish to return to employment often have a gap in their work history as they have been caring for their families. This can lead to them competing for employment against people who have a full work history and who also may not require the flexibilities that they need to be a working parent which can compound the challenge when applying for local jobs.

This case for change sets out a proposed intervention to enable Clackmannanshire Council to tackle these inequalities by targeting lone parents within Alloa South and East through a Lone Parent Programme (LPP). They will target and work directly with lone parents residing in this area matching them with local employers to develop work related skills and experience required by local businesses providing them with a platform to develop higher skilled roles in the future.

Details of the Alloa South and East geography and eligible post codes can be found in Appendix 1.

2.2 Programme objectives and benefits

In accordance with the HMT guidance, the LPP aims to achieve the following SMART objectives and benefits (minimum level) shown in Table 1.

For the avoidance of doubt, the table refers only to the objectives and benefits to be achieved as a result of the CRD funding – LPP Stage 2 (paid placements) across the period 2025 – 2027.

² [People Community Wellbeing Plan 2024-2025](#), Clackmannanshire Council, August 2024.

³ [Briefing on Single Parents Lived Experience, One Parent Families Scotland, 2020.](#)

⁴ <https://www.scotpho.org.uk/media/1157/scotpho161123-lone-parents-scotland-gb-uk.pdf>

⁵ [Effects of Poverty, Child Poverty Action Group](#)

⁶ ['Why employment matters for health', Public Health Scotland](#)

Table 1: Stage 2 LPP objectives and minimum benefit targets, 2025 - 2027.⁷

Stage 2 LPP Objectives	Total benefit target (min)
Lone parents will improve their work-related skills and qualification levels relevant to the local labour market.	9 people
To provide lone parents with 26 weeks of high-quality work experience opportunities and reduce the gap in their employment history.	9 people
Lone parents are supported into positive destinations including employment, further and higher education (up to 26 weeks from completion).	7 people

Benefit levels have been assumed based on the ability to guarantee funding each participant at the same level. Costs are based on assumptions as shown in the scenarios detailed in Appendix 9 with the budget scenarios illustrating that £100k would fund a minimum of 9 individuals on Universal Credit to each have a guaranteed maximum 25 hours paid placement per week and allow for industry training of up to £1000 per person.

Benefits have therefore been modelled on this basis with the understanding that when in delivery, the programme will support as many individuals as possible within the £100k budget and that the stated benefit levels are the minimum number that the project will achieve.

A prudent assumption on the number of participants progressing into employment has been made by the Clacks Works service. They have considered the potential for changes in the participants' circumstances that could affect their ability to enter employment upon completion, the scale of the programme and the following employment progression rates to forecast an achievable target for the LPP:

- General employability provision (no paid placement) - Clacks Works average annual progression rate of 24%.⁸
- General employability provision - No-one Left Behind national progression rate of 31% and 27% as at 26 weeks.⁹
- Targeted (no paid placement) - Clackmannanshire Parental Employability Support progression rate 39%.¹⁰
- Paid placement scheme – NHS paid placement demonstrator progression rate of 50%.¹¹
- Paid placement scheme - Clackmannanshire Council led Childcare Pathway Programme which had a progression rate of 100% and Clackmannanshire Council was also the employer.¹²

This 78% progression rate would be expected where participant levels exceed 9 and would be the minimum rate expected. This is higher than the NHS demonstrator due to the relationships that the Job Broker team have with local employers but less than 100% as Clackmannanshire Council are not the employer as per the Childcare Pathway Programme.

Clackmannanshire Works will provide aftercare for all LPP participants and will monitor the success of the project against the stated objectives with the support of their in-house compliance team.

⁷ Positive destinations are assumed to be achieved in the 26wk period post completion.

⁸ Positive Moves employability support, 2024.

⁹ [No-One Left Behind](#), Scottish Government, 2019 – 2024.

¹⁰ Parental Employability Support data supplied by Clackmannanshire Council for 2024/25.

¹¹ This was a very small cohort with 100% progressing into positive destinations including employment.

¹² Data supplied by Clackmannanshire Council.

2.3 Evidence of need

Deprivation levels

25% (18) of data zones in Clackmannanshire fall into the 20% most deprived in Scotland. 9.7% (7) of data zones in Clackmannanshire fall into the 10% most deprived in Scotland, 5 of which are in Alloa South & East.¹³

Income and employment deprivation

34% of residents in Alloa South and East are income deprived with almost half of the population recorded as income deprived (47%) in 1 data zone which is significantly higher than the Scottish average income deprivation level of 12%.

Alloa South & East has an average employment deprivation rate of 26% with one data zone recording employment deprivation rate of 35%. This is significantly higher than the Scottish average income deprivation level of 10%.⁷

Employment rate

The Clackmannanshire Council area has a working age population (16 – 64 years) of 32,100¹⁴, with an economic activity rate of 64%.¹⁵ This is lower than the Scottish average (77%) and 16% lower than the UK national target of achieving 80% employment.

The employment rate of lone parents with children aged between 0 and 2 in the UK was over 25 percentage points lower (42% vs 83.4%) than parents in a couple, in October - December 2024.¹⁶

Earnings by place of residence and gender pay gap

Females working in Clackmannanshire experience, on average, lower earnings than males.

Female full-time workers in Clackmannanshire currently earn £35.30 per week (gross) less than the Scottish average and £7.50 per week less than the UK national average.

Female workers living in Clackmannanshire also earn £2.57 per hour less than male workers living in Clackmannanshire. Hourly pay for females working full-time (excluding overtime) in Clackmannanshire is £18.25, £0.70 per hour less than the Scottish national average of £18.95.¹⁷

92% of lone parent families in Scotland are headed by women so the gender pay gap is likely to affect female lone parents in Clackmannanshire.¹⁸

Qualifications – supply and demand

Qualification levels of the working age population are lower in Clackmannanshire than the Scottish (74%) and UK (68%) national averages with 66% having achieved a qualification level of SCQF Level 6 or above.¹⁹ This is the equivalent of 2 or more higher or advanced higher national qualifications.

¹³ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2020.

¹⁴ ONS Population estimates, 2021.

¹⁵ ONS Annual Population Survey, October 2023 – September 2024.

¹⁶ Office for National Statistics

¹⁷ ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Resident Analysis, 2024.

¹⁸ Tackling Child Poverty Priority Families Overview, Scottish Government, 2024.

¹⁹ ONS Annual Population Survey, January 2023 – December 2024.

41% of the working age population have achieved a qualification of SCQF level 7/8, the equivalent of an HND, Degree, Higher Degree level qualifications, compared to 55% at a Scottish and 47% at UK levels.³

Job demand forecasts indicate that the total requirement in Clackmannanshire over 2027 – 2034 equates to 4,200 people with the required qualification levels as shown in Chart 1.²⁰

Chart 1: Forecast total demand in Clackmannanshire by qualification, 2027-2034.²¹

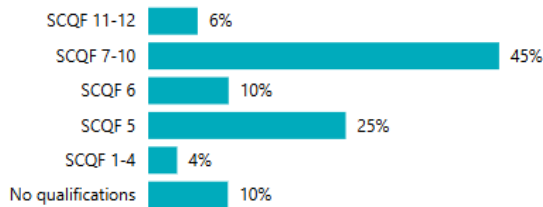


Chart 1 shows that 61% of the demand for skills in the local area will require qualification levels of SCQF Level 6 and above.

This evidences the need to provide opportunities for lone parents to upskill now to meet the future skill and qualification requirements of local businesses.

Work life spent in employment and qualifications

Census data for England and Wales (2021) showed that the proportion of people in employment rises significantly by qualification.

At a local level, an analysis of Clackmannanshire Works case load data for eligible lone parents showed that the higher the qualification level held by lone parents, the higher the proportion of time spent in employment. This ranged from 6% for those with no qualifications to 54% for those with ISCED qualification level of 5 (SCQF equivalent of 7/8).²²

Lone parents are more likely to have low or no qualifications and those that do hold degrees are more likely to work in low or medium skilled occupations.²³ This evidence highlights the need for lone parents accessing the LPP to be increasing their skills alongside the development of their work experience to improve their chances of employment in the future.

Low-income households with children

Almost a third (31%) of children in Clackmannanshire are in workless households, which is the third highest rate in Scotland. In 2022-23 there were 2855 children aged 0 – 15 years living in relative low-income households, an increase of 760 children (36%) since 2016-17.²⁴

Lone parents claiming Universal Credit

Between 2021 and 2024, there has been a 12% rise in households claiming Universal Credit in Clackmannanshire. There has been a 41% increase in the percentage of single parents on Universal Credit across Clackmannanshire during this period, which is broken down by area, in Table 2. Alloa

²⁰ Total demand is the total number of jobs created through expansion and replacement demand.

²¹ Skills Development Scotland, [Data Matrix](#), 2025.

²² ISCED refers to the [International Standard Classification of Education levels](#).

²³ [Child Poverty Among Lone Parent Families](#), Scottish Government, 2020.

²⁴ [People Community Wellbeing Plan 2024-2025](#), Clackmannanshire Council, August 2024.

South and East represents the local area with the greatest number of lone parents claiming Universal Credit (313).²⁵

Table 2: Number of single parents on Universal Credit by Clackmannanshire area 2021 – 2024.

Single, with children	January 2021	January 2022	January 2023 (r)	January 2024 (p)	% diff
Alloa North	125	146	174	198	58.4%
Alloa South and East	219	242	291	313	42.9%
Alloa West	54	61	68	76	40.7%
Alva	123	135	139	155	26.0%
Clackmannan, Kennet and Forestmill	111	129	137	147	32.4%
Dollar and Muckhart	24	25	27	35	45.8%
Fishcross, Devon Village and Coalsnaughton	51	62	69	68	33.3%
Menstrie	23	32	53	56	143.5%
Sauchie	184	204	219	236	28.3%
Tillicoultry	112	116	124	147	31.3%
Tullibody North and Glenochil	149	179	192	212	42.3%
Tullibody South	106	113	136	153	44.3%
Total	1284	1449	1631	1812	41.1%

²⁵ [People Community Wellbeing Plan 2024-2025](#), Clackmannanshire Council, August 2024.

2.4 Service design

Barriers to employment

Lone parents were included in the service design process to learn from their experiences, identify what was preventing them from accessing employment and to better understand what had led to breakdowns in previous employment. The barriers that were referenced frequently across all stakeholders and lone parents are listed below with service design mitigations detailed.

Factor	Description of barrier	LPP service design - mitigations
Gaps in relevant work experience	<p>Lone parents often have gaps in their work history and are competing with candidates who have full work history.</p> <p>Lone parents with a gap in work history find their skills have not kept up with the needs of employers due to the time spent caring for their family.</p>	<p>Clacks Works Job Brokers will find a suitable placement with a local employer on behalf of the lone parent. This placement will enable them to develop their skills and give them up to 6 months of relevant work experience whilst allowing them to train and upskill in an area of importance to the industry or role that they choose their placement in.</p>
Flexibility of employers	<p>Finding employers who are willing to shape working patterns that match available childcare.</p> <p>Employer resistance to changes in circumstances (connected to childcare or other caring responsibilities).</p>	<p>Clacks Works Job Brokers will negotiate the working pattern with an understanding of the childcare pattern of the participant.</p> <p>Clacks Works Job Brokers will support parents with any changes that could affect their working pattern and advocate for parents as required.</p>
Childcare	<p>Limited family support available to help with childcare.</p> <p>Access to local childcare including wrap-around care (out of school hours).</p> <p>School / term time employment is challenging to find.</p> <p>Affordability of childcare when earning a low income.</p>	<p>Clackmannanshire Council's Family Wellbeing Partnership will support the identification of local childcare options including wrap around provision as required.</p> <p>DWP will support the cost of eligible childcare for participants on Universal Credit.</p> <p>Funding from the Family Wellbeing Partnership will provide free childcare where provision is not eligible for DWP funding.</p>
Transport	<p>Cost of public transport.</p> <p>Logistics of travel with requirement to get child/children to childcare provider and then travel to work destination.</p>	<p>Paid placements will be locally based.</p> <p>Clacks Works will use their existing relationships with local employers and City Region Deal projects located in Alloa to match participants to the needs of the employer.</p>
Skills – level and relevance	<p>The skill level of the parent may not match the demand for skills in the local area.</p>	<p>The employer and parent will agree industry related training that is suitable over the 6-month placement to develop skills that are needed locally.</p> <p>City Region Deal Flexible Skills Funding will be sought to cover the cost of agreed industry related training where the LPP cannot due to cost.</p>

Lessons learned

The Clackmannanshire Lone Parent Programme (LPP) has been modelled on and includes critical components of successful parental employability pathways programmes that have been delivered within Clackmannanshire (Clackmannanshire Council Childcare Pathway), Forth Valley (NHS Demonstrator) and Glasgow (One Parent Families Scotland & Public Health Scotland Pathway). A summary of these programmes and key findings can be found in Appendix 2.

Components that have been embedded in the LPP design are:

1. **Designed by lone parents for lone parents** ensuring that their experiences have shaped the offer.
2. **Preparatory programme** with a cohort of eligible individuals to provide peer support, assist with participant screening, confidence building and fundamental employability skills.
3. **Job matching** individuals career interests with labour market opportunities.
4. **Working pattern** – the working pattern will be personalised to the individual participant to ensure that it fits with available childcare.
5. **The inclusion of industry related training** meeting the needs of the employer and interests of the participant.
6. **Key working** to ensure personalised support for participants during the LPP and up to 52 weeks from progression into employment.
7. **The duration of the placement** – the offer of 6 months on placement to allow time to develop credible in work skills and experience and gain a positive reference for future employers.

2.5 Dependencies

The following dependencies have been identified throughout the project design process that are essential to the project achieving its objectives.

- Clackmannanshire Council providing a key worker and job broker service to each participant through Clackmannanshire Works for the duration of the project and up to 52 weeks after completion. This service will source, screen and provide essential personalised employability support for LPP participants.
- Clackmannanshire Council providing staff resources and budget to deliver Stage 1 of the LPP which will source and screen and progress suitable participants into the CRD funded Stage 2 LPP.
- The creation of locally based work placements to develop the skills and experience of LPP participants.
- Access to Clackmannanshire Council Family Wellbeing Partnership Funding to maximise childcare funding available to LPP participants.
- Benefits advice and financial calculations to ensure LPP participants understand the impact on their household finances and can manage transitions when increasing their earnings through the paid placement and/or future employment.

2.6 Stakeholder engagement

The LPP was co-designed by staff from across Clackmannanshire Council including Key Workers and Job Brokers from the employability service (Clacks Works), Child Poverty Coordinator, City Region Deal Flexible Skills Officer, Community Learning and Development and the Child Wellbeing Partnership.

Lone parents attending existing Community Learning and Development activities were consulted within the community setting of Alloa South & East.

External stakeholders were also consulted including third sector organisations supporting parents and families in Alloa, Forth Valley College and One Parent Families Scotland. The Department of Work and Pensions (East) provided vital input surrounding managing changes in circumstances for people in receipt of Universal Credit and compatibility of LPP design while in receipt of Universal Credit.

2.7 Proposed intervention

The proposed intervention will complement the Scottish Government's Parental Employability Support investment in Clackmannanshire enhancing the opportunities for lone parents without risk of duplication.

The LPP will consist of two distinct but connected stages. A group-based preparatory stage (funded by existing Clackmannanshire Council budgets and using existing Council resources where possible) and a paid placement stage (funded by the LPP City Region Deal). Both stages collectively create a supportive pathway for lone parents who are currently economically inactive to address skills gaps within the local labour market.

Participants would be identified and referred by Council, third sector services and DWP (Alloa Job Centre) for Stage 1. During Stage 1, participants who demonstrate an ability to successfully engage with and sustain a paid placement will progress into Stage 2.

Details of what will be delivered at each stage is noted below.

Stage 1 – Preparation and screening (group work)

Lone parents who are eligible for the LPP will be involved in a group-based programme to prepare them for them for a part time paid placement (Stage 2). It will also enable Clacks Works to identify additional support needs ahead of placing individuals within local businesses ensuring that those who progress are more likely to engage, sustain and complete Stage 2.

Stage 1 preparatory programme would include:

- 6 group workshops delivered in Alloa over a 12-week period:
 - Confidence and wellbeing for the workplace
 - Skills identification
 - Careers Guidance
 - Understanding your employment rights
 - CV development
 - Mock interviews
- Completion of the Employability Award, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SCQF Level 4)

- Weekly key working and goal setting with Clacks Works
- Placement matching by Clacks Works Job Brokers
- 'Better Off' Calculations completed by Citizens Advice

Employer placements will be sourced from local businesses and City Region Deal projects operating in the Alloa or Clackmannanshire area. The Clacks Works Job Broker team have existing relationships with local employers and work directly with the business community to help them to source people with the skills that they need through Clacks Works Key Work service.

Participants will be matched into identified placements within local businesses towards the end Stage 1 by the Clacks Works Job Broker team who will help parents and the employer agree a sustainable working pattern and industry related training plan before progressing to Stage 2.

Placements will be sourced by Job Brokers across a range of important local industries including; health and social care, construction, retail, hospitality, tourism, childcare and organisations in the third sector.

The development of a training plan will involve the key worker, participant and employer. This will enable the individual to better understand the industry specific skills that the employer within their workforce including digital skill requirements and the critical meta skills that the participant will develop over the placement period. The key worker will support the participant to identify, enrol and participate in the training that meets the needs of the employer and the individual.

Training will be purchased, as is current practice for the Clacks Works team, on an individual basis from private training providers or local third sector providers. Training that offers industry accreditation or licenses in a sector relevant to the employer will be sought and links to provision available locally through Forth Valley College, offering a range of non-certified, fully funded and certified opportunities will be considered.

Payment of the Real Living Wage to participants will be encouraged. In accordance with the Scottish Government's Fair Work First Approach, where an organisation genuinely cannot afford to pay the Real Living Wage to part(s) or all of its workforce, a limited exception to the grant may be requested via an Exception Request as detailed in Appendix 10.

Employers will enter and sign an agreement with Clackmannanshire Council as used with previous funded placement programmes which makes clear the funding conditions related to the LPP – see Appendix 3.

Stage 2 – Paid placement (individual)

- Paid part time work placement lasting 26 weeks
- Completion of industry related training
- Key work support including on-going employability support
- Employer 'check-ins' with participant and employer in weeks 1, 4, 13 and 25
- Employer reference

Placements will be part time and the number of hours committed to each week will vary by individual. The maximum number of hours per week for a paid placement will be 25hrs. There will be no minimum number of hours mandated as Clacks Works have reported that employers look for and value the length of time in previous employment more than the number of hours worked per week.

This enables lone parents to establish a sustainable working pattern and build a credible work history no matter the number of hours worked.

Participants may still be required to spend time on work related activities and applying for jobs in accordance with their Claimant Commitment and as agreed with their Jobcentre Work Coach.

Costs associated with childcare will be funded through DWP with the Child Wellbeing Partnership at Clackmannanshire Council funding the first month of childcare to remove costs for participants with DWP claiming in arrears. The Child Wellbeing Partnership will fund childcare when it is not eligible for DWP support.

Costs associated with uniform and travel will be funded through the Clackmannanshire Council Barrier Free Fund and paid for in advance to remove costs for participants.

Costs associated with industry related training that is relevant to the placement role will be funded through the LPP up to the value of £1000 per participant. Where the cost of industry training exceeds £1000 per individual, Clacks Works will develop a case and apply to the City Region Deal Flexible Skills Training Fund as required to seek funding for this on a case-by-case basis.

Vital key work support will be available throughout the placement through Clacks Works. Key work includes supporting participants to access local public and third sector agencies and services to remove barriers to sustaining future employment. This can include literacy and numeracy, health and wellbeing services and support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Clacks Works will support participants to apply for jobs with their newly enhanced skills and experience gained while on the LPP. Locally available Employer Recruitment Incentives available at the time of completion will be promoted and when the placement concludes, parents can continue to access Clacks Work's Parental Employability Support for further industry related training that will enhance their employability prospects.

Those who have not secured sustainable employment by the end of Stage 2 will return to the weekly key work support through Clacks Works. Those who progress to a positive destination including employment will receive up to 52 weeks of aftercare through the Parental Employability programme delivered by Clacks Works. Here participants can continue to access personalised employability support and additional funding to build on the work-related skills and experience gained on the LPP.

Grant funding will support wages and employer on-costs but will not fund costs that are recoverable by the employer through HMRC. More information on eligible costs can be found in the [Financial Case](#).

2.8 Strategic alignment

UN Sustainable Development Goals

The LPP is aligned to the delivery of the following Sustainable Development Goals:

Goal 1	No poverty
Goal 3	Good health and wellbeing
Goal 4	Quality education
Goal 5	Gender equality
Goal 8	Decent work and economic growth
Goal 10	Reduced inequalities

UK Government

UK Industrial Strategy

The LPP contributes to the delivery of the UK government's [Invest 2035 Industrial Strategy](#) and its mission for growth. The LPP directly contributes to the creation of good jobs that will improve living standards. It will help to address existing workforce skills vacancies and cost of living challenges faced by businesses funding vital training that will contribute to a skilled labour force which supports regional growth.

[The Get Britain Working White Paper](#), highlights that national ambition to achieve an 80% employment rate for people aged 16 – 64 years across the UK. As outlined above, Clackmannanshire has an employment rate of 64%. The LPP will engage lone parents in receipt of Universal Credit providing them with the qualifications that address gaps faced by local businesses and work-based experience to improve their employment prospects and increase their ability to earn at a higher level in the future.

Scottish Government

National Performance framework

The LPP is aligned to the following outcomes within the National Performance Framework:

- We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally
- We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
- We have thriving and innovative businesses with quality jobs and fair work for everyone

National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET)

The LPP is aligned to the Skilled Workforce and Fair and More Equal Society outcomes set out in the [NSET](#) by tackling inequalities faced by lone parents, upskilling through qualifications and work based experience and ultimately contributing to higher rates of employment, higher incomes and reducing child poverty for lone parent families.

Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 outlines the Scottish Government's ambition to reduce the proportion of children in poverty by 2030. The [Best Start Bright Futures, Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan \(2022 – 2026\)](#) states that lone parent families are one of six priority groups as they are at highest risk of child poverty. The LPP will support the Scottish Government's ambition to reduce child poverty by targeting lone parents on Universal Credit, offering them personalised support to develop their skills and work-based experience to increase their household earnings.

Regional alignment

The LPP is an enabling investment that will target people who are excluded from the labour market, remove barriers to inclusion and enhance the skills and experience of local people to enable them to access and sustainably participate in the labour market opportunities now and in the future.

The LPP supports the delivery of the City Region Deal outcomes of inclusive economic growth, shared prosperity, higher value jobs and an inclusive skills ecosystem.

CRD Outcomes	Detail of alignment
Inclusive growth	The project will identify lone parents who are excluded from the labour market and connect them with economic opportunities in the region.
Inclusive skills ecosystem	The project will improve the skills and qualification levels of lone parents facing exclusion from the labour market.
Higher value jobs	The project will equip lone parents with the qualifications, skills and experience needed to secure and sustain higher paid jobs in the future.
Shared prosperity	The project will work with lone parents who are less likely to benefit from economic opportunities in the region and improve their ability to increase their household income in the future.

The LPP will enable locally based CRD projects to create local opportunities for one of the Deal's target groups (those living in areas of deprivation). Locally based CRD projects may include Scotland's International Environment Centre, Active Travel and Regional Digital Hubs (Clackmannanshire). It is recognised that the status of the capital projects is a factor in being able to successfully place participants with Deal projects however if not possible, the LPP will seek to place participants with Deal partners in an existing suitable, associated service.

Local alignment

The proposed LPP will contribute to the delivery of the Clackmannanshire [Wellbeing Economy Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2024 - 2034](#) (LOIP) sets out a Vision of 'Working together to reduce inequality and improve wellbeing of all people in Clackmannanshire'.

The resources and actions of Clackmannanshire Council are focussed around improving outcomes across three strategic themes; Wellbeing, Economy & Skills and Places. The LPP is aligned with outcomes of the Wellbeing theme tackling the causes of poverty and working to mitigate the financial challenges for vulnerable community members. The LPP will also support the Economy and Skills theme by improving access to training and learning and developing the skills of lone parents required by local businesses.

The LPP forms part of the City Region Deal Programme which supports the ambitions of Clackmannanshire Council's '[Be The Future](#)' Transformation Strategy. Be the Future focuses on sustainable inclusive growth, empowering families & communities, and health & wellbeing.

The LPP is aligned with the Clackmannanshire Council, Community Wellbeing Plan 2024-2025 and the Clackmannanshire Council Tackling Poverty Plan 2023-2024. Details are shown in Appendix 4.

2.9 Options analysis

Do nothing – Business as Usual

Lone parents can currently access Clacks Works employability services for key work and person-centred support for barrier removal, employability skill development to help people access and sustain employment.

The disadvantage with the BAU option is that it is difficult to address the gap in employment history for lone parents. Unpaid placements are possible, however there is less of an incentive for lone parents to want to attend an unpaid placement with the additional pressure of organising childcare so uptake is estimated to be far less likely in this case.

The BAU offer is the same as that offered to two-parent families with no funding for targeted support within the local employability system to address the employment history gap and increase household income of lone parents on Universal Credit living in Alloa South and East.

There is a limited training budget to support local businesses with skills gaps with businesses facing cost of living challenges and increased costs.

This is not recommended as this will continue to place lone parents and their children in Alloa South and East at risk of the impacts of financial insecurity both now and in the future.

Do minimum

The 'do minimum' option would see an existing THRIVE programme expanded and targeted at lone parents in Alloa South & East. This programme delivers community-based workshops designed to improve confidence, and coping with day-to-day stresses as well as advice on how to create a healthier and more positive lifestyle. The City Region Deal funding would be used to pay for direct costs including delivery staff, room hire and subsistence.

Advantages could include working with a greater number of lone parents from Alloa South & East who are some distance from the labour market to help them develop fundamental life skills and improving the confidence, self-belief and motivation of lone parents.

This option however does not address current labour market challenges for lone parents. It does not fill the gap in the current employability system for lone parents who require additional support to transition into employment. Outcomes will not be as likely to lead to increased household income for lone parents as it is not employment focussed. It does not address the gaps in work related experience and qualifications for lone parents, a significant barrier to employment, nor does it support the ability of people to successfully manage their transition into higher earnings.

In addition, this option does not help to tackle skills gaps faced by local businesses.

There is less confidence that there is sufficient demand for this option based on existing Clackmannanshire case load numbers and taking into consideration that it does not financially incentivise the participation of lone parents.

Recommended option

The recommended option is to build on previous successful employment pathway programmes and develop a paid placement scheme for lone parents residing in the Alloa South & East area of Clackmannanshire. The City Region Deal funding will be used to pay participant wages, employer on-costs and industry training for participants ensuring that the placement comes at no cost to local businesses or participants. No CRD funds will be used to cover the cost of supporting Council staff as it will be integrated into the existing Council employability service, Clacks Works.

The paid placement scheme will be managed and delivered by Clacks Works who have extensive experience supporting unemployed local people through their Key Work and Job Broker teams and currently support over 400 people per year.

Clacks Works will source placements with local businesses and match lone parents with an employer based on previous education and experience and employment aspirations of the participants. Placements will last for 26 weeks addressing gaps in recent work history for participants.

An industry related training plan will be agreed with the employer's input which will be completed during their time on placement enhancing their employability whilst helping local businesses to tackle skills gaps that they face.

Participants will increase their earnings throughout their time on the programme, incentivising engagement throughout.

Although the recommended proposal would support fewer people than the "Do minimum" option, it is recommended as it provides a targeted employment and skills focussed intervention that directly addresses a gap within the local employability system and supports local skills shortages.

The programme will transition lone parents from unemployment into paid work and provide a platform for lone parents to then increase their earning potential in the future.

A logic model for the recommended LPP option is shown in Appendix 5.

2.10 Timescales

The LPP would be delivered across 2 cohorts from August 2025 until March 2027.²⁶ The first cohort would run in 2025/26 and aim to support a minimum of 5 lone parents. The second cohort would be delivered in financial year 2026/27 and would aim to support a minimum of 4 lone parents.

2.11 Risks

Internal and external stakeholders and feedback from lone parents fed into the development of the project risk register. The main risks associated with the LPP are summarised in Table 3. A full Risk Register can be found in Appendix 6.

²⁶ Assuming business case approval in June 2025.

Table 3: Risk Summary for LPP programme.

Risk	Description of risk	Mitigation
Engagement of lone parents from Alloa South & East.	The LPP does not attract enough participants from Alloa South & East.	Clacks Works have already begun identifying and screening potential candidates from existing case load data. Third sector agencies supporting lone parents and families have been engaged in the project design and will support the identification of eligible participants. Benefit targets are in line with case load supply data from Alloa South & East.
Engagement of local employers	The number of placement opportunities is lower than the target number of participants.	Stage 1 allows lead in time to complete the matching exercise understanding the skills and experience to date of participants. Clacks Works Job Brokers would use existing relationships and an understanding of the needs of local employers to source high quality placements for parents. City Region Deal projects led by the University of Stirling and Clackmannanshire Council operating in Alloa will seek to create high quality placements where possible.
Flexibility of local employers	Placements offered are not flexible enough to meet the needs of participants.	Clacks Works Job Brokers have relationship with local businesses and will advocate for flexibility when agreeing the working pattern with the employer. This will form part of the Employer Agreement set out in Appendix 3.
Child Wellbeing Partnership (CWP) – additional childcare budget	Child Wellbeing Partnership budget to pay for childcare not covered by DWP is no longer available after current budget concludes in March 2026.	The LPP will seek to support the majority of parents before the end of March 2026 where CWP budget is available for the cost of non DWP eligible childcare. Thereafter, DWP budget will be used to cover childcare with support from the CWP to locate appropriate childcare than enables participants to attend their placements.

2.12 Costs

All costs associated with the LPP are participation based and CRD funds will be used to fund participant wages, Employer National Insurance, Employer Pension and industry related training costs.²⁷ No CRD funding will be used to contribute to existing Council staffing involved in the delivery, management or administration of the project. These costs will be absorbed by existing Council budgets.

More information on the costs can be found in the [Financial Case](#).

2.13 Procurement route

Clackmannanshire Council will lead and manage the proposed LPP therefore there is no procurement route associated with the proposal.

²⁷Industry related training costs up to £1000 per person.

3. Economic case

3.1 Participant cohort

Background characteristics for the lone parents identified as potential participants in the project were provided by Clackmannanshire Council. The participant cohort was small with a cohort of 16 lone parents identified as potential participants. The benefits and costs assume that 9 lone parents will participate in the project due to some of the lone parents requiring additional support before participating.

The participant cohort is small, and the characteristics are shown in a summary format to avoid disclosing any information that may identify individuals participating in the project. A small number of participants means that the performance of just two or three participants could significantly change the anticipated project benefits and costs.

3.2 Lone parent characteristics

Figure 1 below shows the proportion of the number of years during which participants may have worked (since age 18) that have been spent in employment. Across all participants around one in four (26%) years of their working life had been spent in employment.

The International Standard Classification of Education ([ISCED](#)) was used to show the highest level of qualifications held by participants. Within the participant cohort there is clear link between the level of qualifications held and engagement with employment.

Figure 1: Proportion of working years in employment by qualification level

Highest level of qualification held	Working years spent in employment
5	54%
4	35%
2 to 3	12%
0	6%
Total	26%

Source: Clackmannanshire Council (participant data)

For those with highest qualifications held at ISCED level 5 just over half (54%) of working years had been spent in employment. ISCED level 5 is broadly equivalent to levels 7 and 8 in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework ([SCQF](#)), including qualifications up to Higher Apprenticeship or Higher National Diploma (HND).

At ISCED level 4 just over one third (35%) of the working years had been spent in employment. For those holding ISCED levels 2 or 3 around in eight years were spent in employment (12%) with just 6% of working years spent in employment for those not holding any formal qualifications.

The average length of time since the participant cohort were last employed was just over one year. Just over half the cohort (53%) had been out for work for at least a year while one third (33%) had been employed within the last three months. There was no clear pattern between the length of time since participants were last employed and their level of qualifications held.

The participant cohort had an average of two children. Half (50%) the group had one child, one quarter (25%) had two children, the remaining quarter (25%) had three or more children. Just over two thirds (69%) of lone parents participating in the project were female and nearly one third (31%) were male.

3.3 Addressing challenges in Alloa

As set out in the evidence of need one quarter of data zones in Clackmannanshire fall into the 20% most deprived in Scotland according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation ([SIMD](#)). The SIMD data also shows that more than one third (34%) of the residents in the intermediate zone of [Alloa South and East](#) are income deprived.

Of the six data zones in the Alloa South and East area one data zone shows almost half the population (47%) as income deprived.

Clackmannanshire Council's [People Community Wellbeing Plan 2024-2025](#) highlights that almost a third (31%) of children are in workless households, the third highest rate in Scotland. The number of children living in relative poverty has been rising in Clackmannanshire and nearly two thirds (65%) of children were in lone parent households.

3.4 Supporting economic benefits

The project will identify eligible and suitable lone parents, provide a preparatory programme, arrange suitable paid placements, enable training related to the placement, identify the childcare needed to support the placement, provide ongoing placement support for participants and employers, providing education and skills development during the placement.

The project will enable placement check-ins to monitor progress, identify any further training needed, and support any emerging challenges. Towards the end of the placement the project will provide employability support for participants including goal setting, CVs, application forms and mock interviews. Participants will also be provided with post-placement aftercare support.

Pre-placement support (ahead of the placement) will take around twelve weeks with the placement lasting around six months. Preplacement support will be used for participants to work toward an SQA Level 4 [Employability Award](#). The Employability Award is an introduction to the world of work for those who are unsure about how to gain and sustain employment.

The Lone Parent project will work with a cohort in need of support to better understand their options to gain and sustain employment. The project will reduce risks and barriers for local employers hiring new employees. The project will help align support services including support with childcare and training alongside the placement opportunity.

The project will fund training (and qualification) for individuals that will be relevant to the employer for each placement. The personalisation of support targeted and tailored for each placement has the potential to turn placements into longer term opportunities with their placement employer or other local employers.

3.5 Measuring economic benefits

It is reasonable to assume that each placement will pay the real Living Wage rate in Scotland. The Scottish budget ([2025-26](#)) stated that *“Employers are encouraged to consider a progressive approach to pay and are required to pay at least the real Living Wage rate of £12.60 per hour.”*

If participants work around 25 hours per week (allowing for project support time and training) then each participant would receive gross weekly wages of £8,229 over six months (£16,458 each year). This suggests total gross wages of £74,000 for the 9 participants over six months. City Region Deal projects are usually considered in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) impacts. [Detailed estimates](#) of the components of GVA are published by the Scottish Government and suggest income from employment accounts for around 60% of GVA; the other principal component is gross operating surplus (reflecting the operating profits of employers).

The latest Input-Output tables (balanced industry tables) for 2021 show Gross Value Added (GVA) at basic prices of £150,705.9 million with compensation of employees at £88,681.3 million (58.8%). Compensation of employees as a share of GVA is slightly across Scotland's services (60.4%).

The participants will contribute to the value added by employers. If additional GVA were attributed using the above ratio of income to GVA then the project placements would be associated with £123,000 of GVA. The additional GVA (beyond income) associated with participants was reduced by two thirds to reflect the focus on training and skilled development during the placement, the project placements are associated with £90,000 of GVA.

The two thirds reduction reflects the likely lower contribution of the beneficiaries to the operating surplus of the employers. A reduction of two thirds was made based on the additional time allocated to beneficiaries for induction, formal training, and on-the-job training.

The [State of the Nation 2024](#) report published by the Social Mobility Commission (September 2024) explores differences in earnings. Those holding higher degrees earned the most and those with lower-level qualifications (below GCSE) earned the least (after accounting for socio-economic background, sex and age). Those with higher degrees earned 57.6% more than those with lower-level qualifications (below GCSE), shown in Figure 2.

These figures were adjusted to show the earnings premium between each qualification level. Workers with higher degrees earned 6.6% more than those with first degrees. Workers with A level (or equivalent) as their highest qualification earned 11.9% more than those with GCSEs (or equivalent).

Figure 2: Differences in UK hourly earnings relative to lower-level qualifications

Level of highest qualification held	Difference relative to lower level	Difference relative to previous level
Higher degree	57.6%	6.6%
First degree	47.9%	14.6%
Further education below degree	29.1%	11.7%
A level and equivalent	15.6%	11.9%
O level, GCSE and equivalent	3.3%	3.3%
Lower level (below CSE grade 1)	0.0%	-

Source: [State of the Nation 2024](#), Social Mobility Commission (September 2024)

Notes: Differences in hourly earnings of 25-29 year olds, relative to those with lower level (below GCSE grade 1 or equivalent) qualifications,

controlling for socio-economic background, sex and age (UK, 2020 to 2022 combined)

The pattern of earnings premia in Figure 2 (above) shows a return for more highly qualified workers. Among the participant cohort the following highest levels of qualifications were held:

- 38% held qualifications at SCQF level 7-8 (equivalent of up to HND or HNC)
- 25% held qualifications at SCQF level 5-7 (equivalent of up to advanced higher)
- 31% held qualifications at SCQF level 1-4 (equivalent of up to National 4)
- 6% did not hold formal qualifications

The earnings premia were applied to participants. Additional earnings were assumed to arise the year after the project placement. The proportion of the participant cohort with no formal qualifications were assumed increase their wage by 3.3% (above the Real Living Wage) to reflect the SQA Level 4 Employability Award. The 31% of participants that already hold qualifications at SCQF level 1-4 were also assumed to experience a rise in wages of 3.3% reflecting a similar uplift in line with those without qualifications.

The 25% of participants holding qualifications at SCQF level 5-7 were assumed to secure employment with wages reflecting their qualifications (rising 15.6%). These gains are realised through improved confidence, employability, continual training and skills development. Similarly, the 38% of participants holding qualifications at SCQF level 7-8 were assumed increase their wages by 29.1% reflecting their qualifications.

The overall impact is an average rise of 16% rise in wages across participants following the project. The project will also increase the likelihood of participants finding and sustaining employment (following completion of the project).

A conservative estimate was made that the participant cohort is likely to raise the proportion in employment to the higher participation rates (54%) shown among the top performing participants (shown in Figure 1). This is similar to figures set out by Gingerbread ([January, 2023](#)) and the significant challenges in sustaining employment ([The-Single-Parent-Employment-Challenge](#)).

The impacts are discounted using the social time preference rate of 3.5% as set out in HM Treasury's Green Book. Impacts were considered to persist *over five years*; most participants are likely to face significantly reduced barriers to employment related to childcare and longer-term benefits are more likely to be attributed to ongoing training and skills development.

Based on the above assumptions the discounted benefits over five years amount to an additional £290,000.

Based on the above assumptions the discounted benefits over five years amount to an additional £290,000 in GVA. These benefits reflect the GVA from the initial project placement and employment sustained following the placement.

3.6 Net economic benefits

The gross economic impacts were adjusted to consider only the net additional impacts that will arise because of the Lone Parent project and disregard activities that may happen even in the absence of the project. Green Book guidance suggests that additional impacts need to take account of:

Leakage, the extent to which effects leak out of a target area into others which may include workers commuting into other areas to take up new employment opportunities.

Displacement and diversion, the extent to which impacts associated with the project are offset by reductions elsewhere. This is relevant as some existing activities may move from other areas to the target area.

Substitution where firms or consumers substitute one activity for another as a result of the intervention.

Deadweight, which refers to outcomes that would have occurred without the intervention.

Leakage will be minimal as the project has identified local participants that will be matched with local employers to ensure benefits are fully captured within Clackmannanshire. Significant sources of displacement, diversion and substitution were not identified. Significant sources of displacement and diversion were not identified.

There may be potential for substitution, if placements would have been done by others in the absence of this programme, reducing the additionality of this project. Other placements may be available, and some placements may offer some parts support included in this project, but the unique feature of this project is support tailored for the target group with resources from across the Council and partners acting in concert through the City Region Deal.

Deadweight was the only factor identified that is likely to reduce the project benefits as participants may find some work in the absence of the Lone Parent project. However, the participants engagement in with employment is generally low and the selected participants face significant barriers relating to childcare.

Although more highly qualified participants have had greater prior engagement with work, current childcare barriers suggest that engagement with employment is likely to be limited (in the absence of the project) with risk of the atrophy of skills and confidence once participants are able to work. Deadweight is therefore addressed by limiting the consideration of benefits to five years. The benefits from engagement in employment (but not increases in wage rates) were reduced further by 5%. The deadweight and substitution effects reduced the gross benefits by 12%.

3.7 Benefits and costs

Figure 3 summarises the discounted project benefits and costs. The project costs are based on 9 participants but will be determined by project activities and the number of participants completing the project. For example, it is possible that the project may exceed the target number of participants (due to more people taking on work with fewer hours).

The project costs are assumed to be £100,000; this represents the maximum funding currently available. The project will move into delivery quickly and participants may take on more hours or seek additional support and training to maximise opportunities to secure and sustain employment. It is possible project costs will be lower depending on the scale and scope of activities as the project develops.

The project benefits were further reduced to account for optimism bias (5%). The most likely source of optimism bias in the information used to build the participant profiles and the selection of

participants. The participants selected are expected to complete the placement with a number of potential participants needing further preparation before taking part in the project. Optimism bias is therefore unlikely to be significant, but it is possible that an optimistic view of participant profiles was taken.

Figure3: Project benefits & costs

Category	Value
Gross benefits (discounted)	£290,000
Net benefits (discounted)	£255,000
Benefits (-5% optimism bias)	£242,000
Project costs	£100,000
Net Social Present Value (NSPV)	£142,000
Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR)	2.42

Geographic impacts

The impacts for the City Region (Stirling & Clackmannanshire), Scotland and the UK will be similar. Benefits will be secured within the City Region with minimal leakage (through project design and selection of participants and local employers). Multiplier effects are not considered for the measured benefits and therefore no adjustment is made for the different geographic areas.

The project has identified some additional cost savings that may be claimed at for Scotland and the UK through the movement from benefit payments to paid employment and contributions to national insurance and income tax. However, the effect of targeting income deprived participants facing multiple barriers to employment (and economic opportunity) is partly illustrated through a distributional weight (see below).

3.8 Sensitivity analysis and distributional weights

Sensitivity analysis

Economic benefits are most sensitive to the number of participants successfully completing the placement (including training and skills activities). Without consideration of distributional weights (see below) if four or more participants failed to complete the project then the BCR may fall close to 1.0. However, as most project costs will be used to fund the project placements then project costs would also fall limiting the BCR reduction.

The results are sensitive to the distribution of skills within the cohort, which is small. If three or more of the participants with the highest level of qualifications were to fail to complete the project then the BCR may fall close to 1.0 (although as above costs would also be reduced). The small cohort size means the overall project benefits will be significantly influenced by unexpected outcomes for one or two participants.

Distributional weights

The Green Book invites the use of distributional weights to increase the value of benefits to lower income individuals or households. This is based on the principle that the value of income may be higher for low-income recipients.

Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation ([NSET](#)) states an ambition for Scotland to be *“a country where economic power and opportunity are distributed fairly across our regions, cities and towns, rural and island communities”*.

The application of a distributional weight should take into account the distributional effects of the programme impacts and further adjust these impacts to take into account the utility enjoyed by deprived communities from gaining skills, finding work and leaving poverty.

The Scottish Index of Multiple deprivation (SIMD) shows five of the datazones in Alloa fall within the most deprived decile (10%) of communities across Scotland in terms of overall deprivation, employment deprivation, and income deprivation.

Scottish Household Survey ([SHS](#)) shows the median equivalised weekly household income (after housing costs) of £546 (2020-23). The lowest quintile and decile of equivalised weekly household income (after housing costs) were £325 and £231 respectively.

The ratio of the median household income to the lowest quintile was 1.68 and the ratio of the median household income to the lowest decile was 2.36. HM Treasury's Green Book states that a review of international evidence provides an estimate of the marginal utility of income at 1.3.

Adjusting for the marginal utility of income gives welfare weights of 2.0 for the lowest quintile ($1.68^{1.3}$) and 3.1 for the lowest decile ($2.36^{1.3}$). This is consistent with HM Treasury's Green Book which shows welfare weights of 2.4-2.5 for the lowest equivalised household income quintile.

Based on information related to income deprivation (South and East Alloa), a basic distributional weight (without adjusting for utility) would suggest benefits should be allocated weights of between 1.6 and 2.0. Applying an upper-end distributional weight would raise the net benefits (after accounting for optimism bias) from £242,000 to £484,000 with a NSPV of £384,000 and Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of 4.8.

This is conservative as the project draws participants from communities within the most income deprived decile in Scotland. The lone parent cohort is likely to raise the welfare weights further, but it is only intended to illustrate the welfare effects of the project.

These figures are provided to illustrate the importance of considering distributional impacts. The focus of job creation in a community facing significant deprivation represents an excellent opportunity to address child poverty, inequality and the distribution of economic opportunity.

4. Commercial case

4.1 Delivery strategy

The LPP will be managed and led by Clackmannanshire Council. This approach has been selected as it enables the following to be achieved:

- **Maximise value** - Clackmannanshire Council will absorb all direct staff costs through existing budgets. No staff or overhead costs are required to be paid which would be required if procuring to an external organisation. Given the budget available, any third party overhead or staff costs would significantly diminish the funding left to create paid placements and would make it non-viable.
- **Maximise the integration and alignment** – Clackmannanshire Council will use this funding to enhance the employability offer for lone parents, using funds to improve the local employability system and ensure no duplication using existing systems, processes and procedures to streamline the delivery of the LPP.
- **Maximise benefits** - lone parents that are already engaged with the Clacks Works key work service will be offered an opportunity to take part in the LPP with no requirement to send them/refer to an external organisation for the employer engagement and placement support. This enables lone parents to continue to work with a trusted key worker if progressing into a LPP placement and allows the Clacks Works service to have a better understanding of the support needs of participants and their ability to sustain the LPP.

4.2 Procurement strategy

There is no procurement strategy associated with the project as Clackmannanshire Council would be responsible for the management and delivery of the LPP.

4.3 Risk

As the lead organisation, Clackmannanshire Council will be responsible for managing all risks associated with the LPP to ensure that the intended benefits are delivered. A full risk register is shown in Appendix 6.

Risks and mitigations will form part of the quarterly report for the SRO and be reported into Council CRD Programme Board and CRD Governance.

4.4 Payment mechanisms

Employers supporting the project will issue employee payslips to Clackmannanshire Council for reimbursement via the LPP funding as per the funding agreement shown in Appendix 3. Eligible costs are detailed in the [Financial Case](#).

5. Financial case

5.1 Costs and funding

This Business Justification Case seeks £100k of revenue funding through the City Region Deal to deliver the paid placement element of the LPP (Stage 2). Table 5 shows the additional direct delivery costs associated with each stage of the LPP and do not include costs associated with Clackmannanshire Council staff involved in the administration, key working or management of the LPP.

Table 5: Illustrative cost and funder for the recommended LPP option.

Stage of LPP	Cost		Total	Funder
	2025-2026	2026-2027		
1 – preparatory (12 weeks)	£1,325	£1,250	£2,575	Clackmannanshire Council
2 – paid placement (26 weeks)	£53,321	£42,657	£95,978	City Region Deal (revenue)
Total	£54,646	£43,907	£98,553	

Costs have been based on participation scenarios, fund affordability and supply data to ensure confidence in the ability to successfully deliver.²⁸

Stage 1

Clackmannanshire Council will fund direct costs associated with Stage 1 via their existing Social Innovation Partnership Fund and the Clacks Works Barrier Free Fund. This does not include the cost of core Council staff involved in the delivery and management of the programme which will be absorbed by existing budgets. Direct costs incurred relate to third party providers who will deliver individual components of the Stage 1 and cost of registration and certification of SQA awards.

Stage 2

For paid placements, actual costs will be based on each participant's agreed working pattern where working hours per week, actual pension contributions and training costs will vary from person to person.

The cost scenarios illustrate that £100k could fund a minimum of 9 paid placements at a maximum of 25 hours per week and allow for industry training of up to £1000 per person. Participation and cost scenarios are illustrated in Appendix 7.

Management of actual costs associated with the individual number of people engaged and their individual working patterns would be managed by Clackmannanshire Council to fully utilise £100k of CRD funding requested and maximise the benefits delivered.

Payment of the Real Living Wage to participants will be encouraged. In accordance with the Scottish Government's Fair Work First Approach, where an organisation genuinely cannot afford to pay the Real Living Wage to part(s) or all of its workforce, a limited exception to the grant may be requested via an Exception Request as detailed in Appendix 10.

²⁸ Supply data refers to a case load analysis of the number of eligible participants that are already engaged with Clackmannanshire Works.

5.2 Spend profile of recommended option

Table 6 illustrates the spend profile, subject to the approval of the BJC, for the recommended LPP option using the higher Real Living Wage rate to ensure affordability. It illustrates that a minimum of 9 individuals could all be supported at Real Living Wage for up to 25 hrs per week for 26 weeks each.

Table 6: Illustrative spend profile for the recommended LPP option.

9 beneficiaries @25hrs across 2 cohorts RLW	Year		Total
Cost description	2025/26	2026/27	
Wage costs - RLW	£40,950	£32,760	£73,710
Employer NI @15%	£6,143	£4,914	£11,057
Employer Pension @3%	£1,229	£983	£2,211
Industry training	£5,000	£4,000	£9,000
Total cost	£53,321	£42,657	£95,978

If fewer participants are engaged than anticipated, Clackmannanshire Council will seek to maximise the funding being put towards the paid placements of those engaging with the project to ensure full grant utilisation.

5.3 Eligible costs

The financial case assumes that LPP funding will cover the cost of wages and the associated Employer National Insurance and Pension contributions for participants. Clackmannanshire Council will receive a copy of the participant payslips evidencing the employer costs and reimburse employers accordingly.

LPP funding will not cover the following:

- Any Value Added Tax (VAT) reclaimable by the Grantee;
- Any employment costs arising from the Grantee's legal obligations to its employees linked to redundancy;
- Any employment costs that can otherwise be reclaimed through HMRC, such as Statutory Maternity, Statutory Paternity, Statutory Adoption, Statutory Parental Bereavement and Statutory Shared Parental Pay.
- Any Sunk Costs unless otherwise agreed on an exceptional basis by Ministers.

Any sick pay paid by the Employer will be reimbursed by Clackmannanshire Council however this will not come out of the LPP funding and will be paid for by Clackmannanshire Council core budget as per previous paid placement programmes. This ensures that the project comes at no cost to the employers involved.

5.4 Financial monitoring and reporting

Monthly financial performance will be monitored including project forecasting by the Project Manager reporting to the Senior Responsible Owner for onward submission into Council and Deal Governance structures.

5.5 Financial sustainability

This is a time-limited intervention with no ongoing financial commitment beyond the end of the financial year 2026/27.

6. Management Case

6.1 Operational delivery and management

A full list of roles and responsibilities for the operational delivery of the LPP can be found in Appendix 8.

Project delivery

The Child Poverty Coordinator, Clackmannanshire Council will be responsible for the day-to-day delivery and coordination of the LPP including supporting delivery staff and ensuring that the LPP is delivered within budget parameters maximising the benefits that can be delivered.

This role will ensure that additional funding and services outlined in the LPP Logic Model (Appendix 5) are connected and that participants receive an integrated and seamless offer from the Child Wellbeing Partnership, Clacks Works within the Council and the City Region Deal Flexible Skills project.

Project management

The Team Leader, Economic Development, Clackmannanshire Council will be responsible for the operational management of the Lone Parent Programme including Clacks Works staff, financial, benefits and risk management duties and project monitoring and evaluation.

Senior Responsible Officer

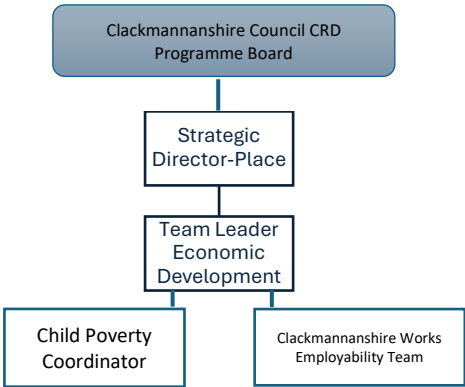
The Strategic Director of Place, Clackmannanshire Council acts as the Senior Responsible Owner for the LPP. As the SRO will be responsible for reporting on LPP performance into Clackmannanshire Council's City Region Deal (CRD) Programme Board including delivery against key milestones, financial, benefits and risk reports in line with the LPP implementation plan. The SRO is supported by an internal CRD Programme Management Office for Clackmannanshire Council.

6.2 Clackmannanshire Council governance

Clackmannanshire Council's CRD Programme Board oversees and supports the effective delivery of all City Region Deal projects which the Council lead and/or are a partner on. The membership of the Board represents individuals who have an interest in the achievement of the outcomes of the programme as well as the authority to make decisions including; Strategic Director of Place (SRO), Programme Assurance – Legal, Chief Finance Officer, all Project Managers and Programme Support Partners including the Head of the Regional Programme Management Office (RPMO).

Clackmannanshire Council staff and reporting lines related to the LPP are shown in Chart 2.

Chart 2: LPP internal reporting lines, Clackmannanshire Council.



6.3 City Region Deal Governance

The LPP as a recognised City Region Deal (CRD) project, performance will be reported into CRD governance.

The Strategic Director of Place, Clackmannanshire Council as SRO will be responsible for reporting into the RPMO for the City Region Deal (CRD) including performance against key milestones, financial, benefits and risk reports in line with the LPP implementation plan.

The SRO is supported by an internal CRD Programme Management Office for Clackmannanshire Council.

City Region Deal Regional Programme Management Office (RPMO)

The RPMO works under the direction of the Chief Officer Group (COG) and is accountable to the Joint Committee of the City Region Deal, via the COG, for the operational delivery of the Deal Programme. The RPMO acts as the single point of contact for government liaison within the context of the City Region Deal.

City Region Deal Chief Officer Group (COG)

The purpose of the COG is to oversee the progress of the Deal and to make recommendations that enable the Joint Committee to make decisions that deliver on the investment of the programme. The Group also acts to ensure that each of the partners are working effectively towards the strategic outcomes of the Deal.

City Region Deal Joint Committee

The Joint Committee is the decision-making forum for all City Region Deal matters and oversees the governance arrangements for the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal. The committee has oversight of all investment and approves business cases.

A structure chart illustrating the Stirling and Clackmannanshire CRD Governance arrangements is available [here](#).

6.4 Monitoring and Reporting

A project report will be produced for the SRO each quarter by the Team Leader, Economic Development, supported by the Council’s in-house compliance team. The report will summarise the projects progress against the implementation plan, benefits delivery and financial performance.

Benefits reporting will review the number of starts, completers, early leavers, qualifications gained, progressions into employment at 4, 13 and 26 weeks. Case studies highlighting positive experiences from the participant and business perspectives will be gathered to build qualitative evidence and lessons learned alongside quantitative data.

Any risks associated with the project's performance including delivery against the spend profile detailed in the Financial Case will be raised with recommended mitigations for consideration of the SRO and Council CRD Programme Board.

The SRO will be responsible for highlighting via CRD Governance any changes to the project implementation plan that could affect the wider Deal, including the spending profile and benefits realisation.

Should there be a requirement to consider and implement a change control process, this will be discussed with the Council CRD Programme Board, RPMO and government liaison officers. CRD change control processes would be followed in accordance with current Deal practice.

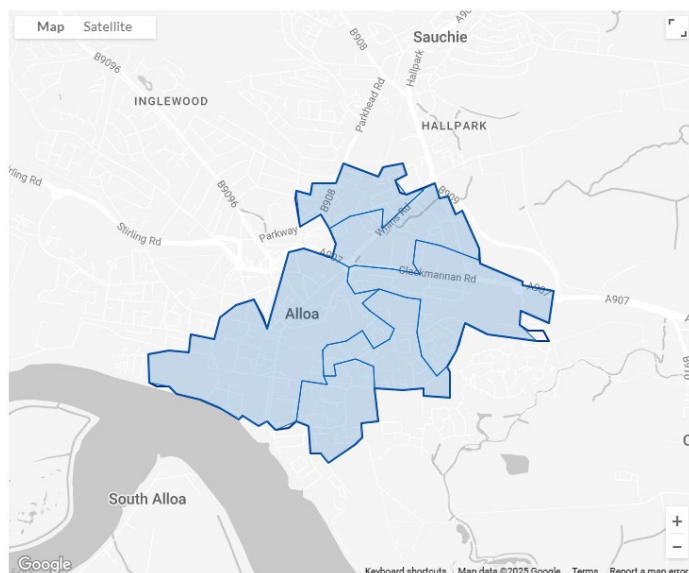
6.5 Evaluation (post completion)

At this time there is no intention for the City Region Deal to fund an external evaluation post completion. The Economic Development team in Clackmannanshire Council have developed this project based on what they know works well and they are aware of risks and challenges learned from previous similar projects.

Upon completion, Clackmannanshire Council will review unforeseen challenges and factors that led to success, identifying learning opportunities to inform future targeted interventions as part of their approach to continuously improve their approach to service delivery.

Appendix 1 Alloa South and East – geography and post code list

The Lone Parent Programme will target individuals living in Alloa South & East. The map below illustrates the targeted area and a post code list for eligible parents is included.¹



Lone Parent Programme eligible post codes

FK10 1AD	FK10 1BZ	FK10 1EL	FK10 1JF	FK10 1PG	FK10 1QN	FK10 2AL	FK10 3RY
FK10 1AF	FK10 1DB	FK10 1EP	FK10 1JG	FK10 1PJ	FK10 1QP	FK10 2AN	FK10 3SB
FK10 1AL	FK10 1DD	FK10 1EQ	FK10 1JJ	FK10 1PL	FK10 1QR	FK10 2AP	FK10 3SD
FK10 1AN	FK10 1DE	FK10 1ER	FK10 1JL	FK10 1PP	FK10 1QW	FK10 2BG	FK10 3SE
FK10 1AR	FK10 1DF	FK10 1ET	FK10 1JN	FK10 1PR	FK10 1RH	FK10 2DA	FK10 3SG
FK10 1AS	FK10 1DG	FK10 1EU	FK10 1JS	FK10 1PS	FK10 1RP	FK10 3GL	FK10 3SH
FK10 1AT	FK10 1DN	FK10 1EX	FK10 1JT	FK10 1PT	FK10 1RQ	FK10 3RD	FK10 3SL
FK10 1AU	FK10 1DQ	FK10 1HE	FK10 1JW	FK10 1PU	FK10 1RR	FK10 3RE	FK10 3SN
FK10 1AW	FK10 1DS	FK10 1HH	FK10 1JX	FK10 1PW	FK10 1RS	FK10 3RF	FK10 3SP
FK10 1AY	FK10 1DT	FK10 1HP	FK10 1JY	FK10 1PX	FK10 1RT	FK10 3RJ	FK10 3SR
FK10 1AZ	FK10 1DW	FK10 1HR	FK10 1LF	FK10 1PY	FK10 1RU	FK10 3RL	FK10 3SS
FK10 1BB	FK10 1DX	FK10 1HS	FK10 1LJ	FK10 1PZ	FK10 1RX	FK10 3RN	FK10 4DA
FK10 1BD	FK10 1DY	FK10 1HX	FK10 1LL	FK10 1QA	FK10 1RY	FK10 3RP	FK10 9BZ
FK10 1BE	FK10 1EA	FK10 1HY	FK10 1LQ	FK10 1QB	FK10 1SA	FK10 3RQ	FK10 9DJ
FK10 1BF	FK10 1EB	FK10 1HZ	FK10 1LW	FK10 1QD	FK10 1SB	FK10 3RR	FK10 9DY
FK10 1BG	FK10 1ED	FK10 1JA	FK10 1LX	FK10 1QE	FK10 1SD	FK10 3RS	FK10 9DZ
FK10 1BL	FK10 1EG	FK10 1JB	FK10 1PA	FK10 1QF	FK10 1SE	FK10 3RT	FK10 9EA
FK10 1BT	FK10 1EH	FK10 1JD	FK10 1PD	FK10 1QG	FK10 1SF	FK10 3RW	FK10 9EB
FK10 1BU	FK10 1EJ	FK10 1JE	FK10 1PE	FK10 1QL	FK10 2AH	FK10 3RX	FK10 9ZZ

¹ [Alloa South & East, Scottish Government](#)

Appendix 2 Service design – lessons learned

The following employability pathway programmes were reviewed with the LPP adopting key findings and success factors.

Childcare Pathway, Clackmannanshire Council

Led by Clackmannanshire Council, the Childcare Pathway was developed by the Employability Service (Clacks Works) and the Family Wellbeing Partnership. Individuals attended a preparatory programme including industry related training before progressing into 6 month paid placements created across the Council led early years estate. 6 participants completed their 6-month placement.

5 participants progressed into employment (including Apprenticeships) and 1 progressed to work towards a higher form of education in Childcare.

NHS Demonstrator, Forth Valley

The NHS Demonstrator developed a pathway for unemployed people in Forth Valley to access a paid placement across the NHS estate in the region. Preplacement support included employability skills, personal statement writing and interview skills. An individual training plan was co-produced with the NHS mentor and a placement ‘check in’ took place each month with the NHS Employability Coordinator and line manager to identify training and support needs. Participants were supported to apply for internal NHS roles throughout and 3 months before the end of their placement, participants were added to the NHS internal redeployment list.

Clackmannanshire Works provided individual key work support to all participants from Clackmannanshire throughout the placement period with 52 weeks of aftercare if successful in securing employment.

Placements are currently in progress and 1 of 4 Clackmannanshire participants have already secured employment.

Lone Parent Pathway, Public Health Scotland and One Parent Families Scotland, Glasgow

Public Health Scotland developed a lone parent pathway into business administration roles working with One Parent Families Scotland to support lone parents throughout.

A six-week OPFS Academy was offered ahead of paid placements covering work-family balance, financial planning, and essential skills, with guaranteed interviews for participants.

Participants then had the opportunity to apply for an 18-month work contract with Public Health Scotland. Successful participants work towards an Access to SCQF Level 5 or 6 in Business Administration through the City of Glasgow College to enhance their skills and employability.

Participants are currently 8 months into their 18-month programme with 100% sustaining to date. Support has been required to support employers to influence flexibility and change workplace practices for the benefit of the employer and participants.

In work, holistic support was deemed a critical success factor to participants sustaining paid placements and supporting changes that can arise during this time. Assistance covering childcare and travel costs to ease financial pressures were also noted as critical factors.



Appendix 3 Employer Agreement

EMPLOYER AGREEMENT

To be completed for each Job Placement

Section 1 - Employer Details

Employer Name:

Address (with postcode):

Telephone:

Email:

Contact Name:

Job Title/Position:

Sector of Employer:

Section 2 - Employer Bank/Building Society Details

Bank/Building Society Sort Code:

Account Name:

Bank/Building Society
Account Number:

Building Society Roll Number:

Section 3 - Employee Details

Employee Name:

Date of Birth:

Employee Address (with postcode):

Employee Telephone/Mobile Number:

Employee Email:

Section 4 – Job Placement Details (End Date cannot exceed **31st March 202X**)

Start Date:

End Date:

Total Weekly Hours:

Hourly Rate:

Total No. of Weeks:

Employer National Insurance Contribution:

Job Placement Title:

Sector of Placement:

Employer Declaration

The Employer named in this Agreement understands and accepts that the Lone Parent Programme funding will be paid subject to the following terms and conditions:

- a. The Employee named in this Agreement is, at date of recruitment, a parent of dependant children, who is currently out of work.
- b. The Job Placement will finish at **XXXXXX** at the latest and will be for a maximum of 25 hours per week but will likely be less hours to fit around childcare arrangements.
- c. The Job Placement offered by you is:
 - a new role which would not exist without this funding;
 - not a replacement for an existing role;
 - not a planned vacancy and will not cause existing staff to lose their jobs or face redundancy.
- d. The Employee will be employed subject to the Employer's usual terms and conditions of employment.
- e. The Employer will provide the Employee with a Job Description and a written Contract of Employment within 2 months of starting.
- f. The Employer will provide the Employee with a written Reference at the end of the Job Placement or earlier if the Employee leaves before this date.
- g. The Employer will allocate a named person in the workplace to supervise and mentor the Employee.
- h. The Employer will pay the Employee **by BACS transfer or by cheque** the agreed hourly rate **which must be the Living Wage**.
- i. The Employer will notify **Clackmannanshire Council IMMEDIATELY** in the event of the Employee being terminated prematurely by either the Employer or the Employee.
- j. In order to claim Lone Parent Programme funding payments, the Employer will provide Clackmannanshire Council with the following in respect of the Employee:
 - copy of a payslip or other payroll information showing employment at point of claim;
 - an invoice requesting payment which will be based on the Living Wage
- k. Lone Parent Programme funding will cover for each Job Placement:
 - **100% of the relevant Living Wage for up to 25 hours a week up to XXXX**
 - **the associated employer National Insurance contributions**
- l. The Employer agrees that any information provided in this Agreement, or any other information supplied in connection with the Agreement, may be disclosed to Clackmannanshire Council, internal & external auditors or the Scottish Government.
- m. The Employer acknowledges the right of Clackmannanshire Council to require refund of the Lone Parent Programme payments if the Employer is in breach of, or fails to fulfil, any of the above conditions.
- n. The Employer is not in receipt of any other public funding for this Employee.
- o. The Employer agrees that the information provided in this Agreement is a true and accurate record.

Employer
Signature

Position

Date:

Council Signature

Position

Date:

Appendix 4 Strategic alignment – local

Clackmannanshire Council, Community Wellbeing Plan 2024-2025

The table below summarises how the Lone Parent Programme (LPP) will support Clackmannanshire Council's Community Wellbeing Plan 2024 – 2025.

Strategic Outcome	Description of alignment
Children and Young People have improved life outcomes by growing up loved, safe and respected.	Children born to parents living in poverty are more likely to experience poor health later in life. They are more likely to have poor mental health and are at higher risk of psychological distress. ¹ The LPP will increase the household income of participants for the duration of the placement. The LPP aims to support lone parents into higher skilled, higher paid employment in the future. This will support children living in low-income households and alleviate the impacts of poverty.
Empowered communities are well designed, inclusive, sustainable, resilient and safe.	The LPP aims to assist employers by improving the local skills supply in line with their needs matching local people into and upskilling them in a way that addresses existing skills gaps through industry related training. This will assist to improve business resilience by improving the local labour supply.
People of all ages successfully contribute to our communities by developing skills for learning, life and work.	The LPP will develop the knowledge, skills and experience of lone parents in Alloa South & East enabling them to progress from unemployment to being economically active.
Poverty in our communities is reduced by improving outcomes for all.	The LPP will increase the household income of participants for the duration of the placement. The impact of the LPP will help participants to secure higher paid employment in the future through their enhanced skills and work-based experience.
People are healthy and active with improved health and wellbeing.	As reported by Public Health Scotland, paid employment has the potential to improve health and reduce health inequalities by providing higher incomes and meeting social and psychological needs. ² The LPP will seek out paid placements that are of good quality in the local area with a regular and stable work patterns, good quality terms and conditions with Job Brokers providing advocacy as required for participants.
Human Rights are respected and fulfilled by tackling inequalities across our communities.	The LPP will help to tackle disproportionate inequalities faced by lone parents by providing a pathway into higher skills, experience and higher earnings. Inequalities including facing twice the risk of poverty as couples ³ , they are at higher risk of poverty, in work poverty, food and financial insecurity and less likely to report being in very good or good general health. ⁴

¹ [Effects of Poverty, Child Poverty Action Group](#)

² ['Why employment matters for health', Public Health Scotland](#)

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-199495-to-201516>

⁴ <https://www.scotpho.org.uk/media/1157/scotpho161123-lone-parents-scotland-gb-uk.pdf>

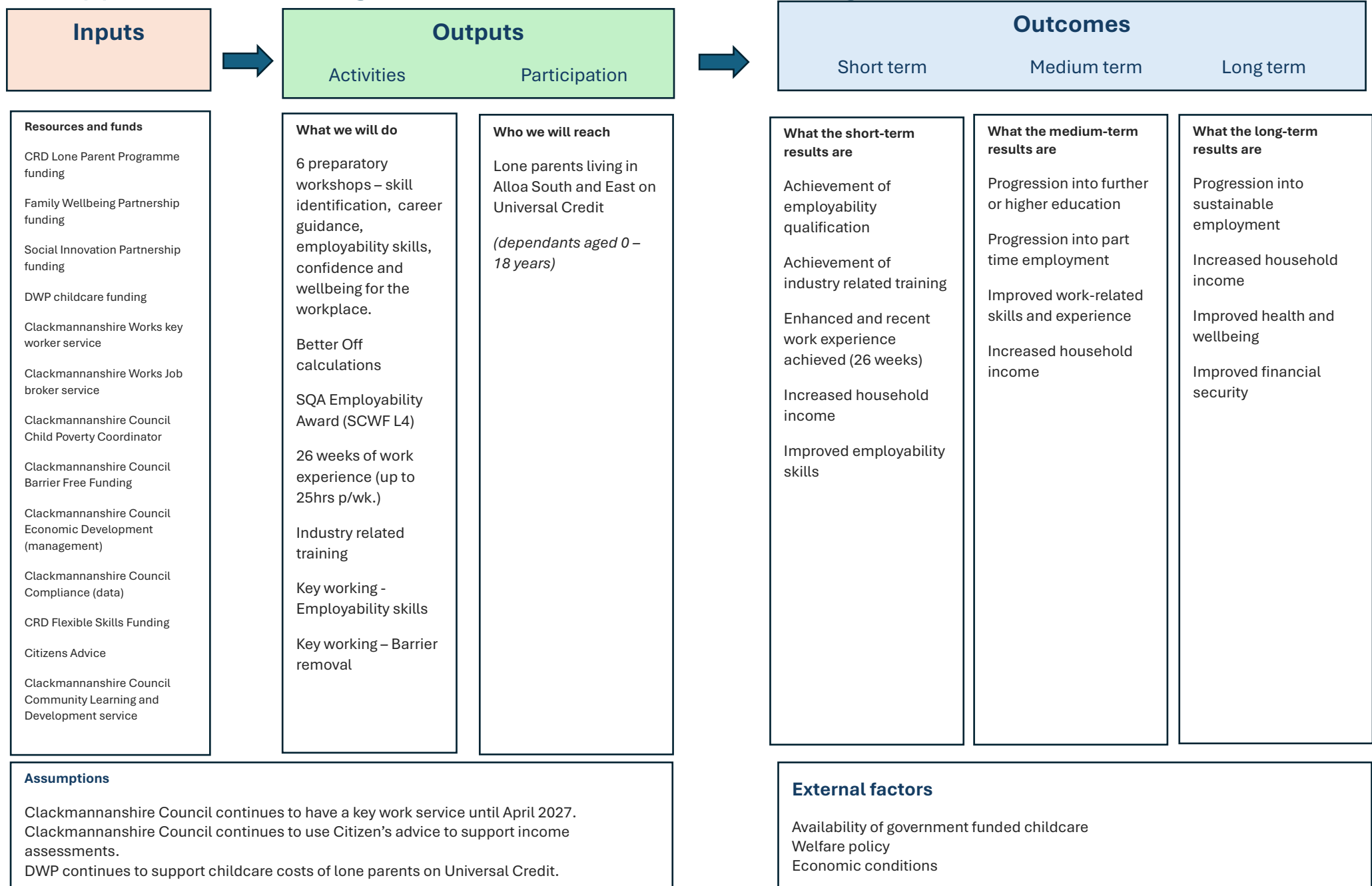
Clackmannanshire Council Tackling Poverty Plan 2023-2024

The Lone Parent Programme (LPP) is aligned to the 6 strategic outcomes from the [Clackmannanshire Tackling Poverty Plan 2023-2024](#) as shown below.

Strategic outcome	Description of alignment
Voice-led transformation is prioritised	Previously tested models of delivery which the LPP is modelled on also embedded the lone parent voice in service design. Local lone parents have been involved in the design of the LPP.
All parts of the system that cause and/or alleviate poverty are working together	The LPP is integrated within Clackmannanshire Council across the Child Poverty, Employability, Community Learning and Development and Family Wellbeing Partnership services to maximise the support available to participants.
Income is maximised through employment	The LPP will provide additional household income for participants in the short term and provide a platform to increase income in the future due to developed knowledge, skills and work-based experience.
Health and wellbeing inequalities linked to poverty are mitigated	The LPP will provide a platform to increase household income and assist to tackle poverty experienced by lone parents.
Income from Social Security and benefits in kind is maximised	Parents will be supported by Clacks Works and Citizens Advice to ensure that the agreed working pattern maximises the income for the household.
Costs of living are minimised	The LPP is free for participants to attend with funding available to support costs associated with childcare, uniform, travel, training and any other associated expense incurred due to participation.

Appendix 5

Logic Model for CRD Lone Parent Programme



Appendix 6 Risk Register

Risk Category	Risk description	Pre Mitigation		Risk Rating (I x L)	Mitigation description	Post mitigation		Updated Risk Rating (I x L)
		Impact score (I)	Likelihood score (L)			Impact score (I)	Likelihood score (L)	
Benefits	Participation The programme does not attract participation in line with benefits target.	4	3	12	A review of the number of eligible lone parents who are already in receipt of Clacks Works Key Work support has taken place and this has been used to set an achievable benefits target. Additional eligible parents can be referred into the programme from third sector and community based groups to highlight individuals who may not already be in receipt of Clacks Works support.	4	1	4
Benefits	Placements Flexible, local placements cannot be sourced for LPP participants.	4	4	16	Clacks Works Job Brokers will use their existing relationships with local businesses to source local placements. CRD projects that are active in Alloa will be targeted for quality placements where they match the aspirations of participants. They will negotiate the working pattern with an understanding of the childcare pattern of the participant supporting parents with any changes that could affect their working pattern and advocate for parents as required.	4	1	4
Benefits	Childcare Participants cannot access local affordable childcare to enable them to participate.	5	4	20	Clackmannanshire Council's Family Wellbeing Partnership will support the identification of local childcare options including wrap around provision as required. DWP will support the cost of eligible childcare for participants on Universal Credit. Funding from the Family Wellbeing Partnership will provide free childcare where provision is not eligible for DWP funding.	3	2	6
Benefits	Transport Cost and logistics prevent participants from accessing paid placements.	4	4	16	Paid placements will be locally based. Clacks Works will use their existing relationships with local employers and City Region Deal projects located in Alloa to match participants to the needs of the employer.	4	1	4
Benefits	Qualifications Participants cannot commit the time to achieve their industry related qualification.	4	4	16	Clacks Works Job Brokers will negotiate with the employer that time on placement should allow for training within the agreed working pattern.	3	1	3
Benefits	Family Wellbeing Partnership (FWP) budget The Family Wellbeing Partnership Budget supporting flexible childcare and up front costs for participants is not continued beyond end of March 2026	4	4	16	Economic Development to liaise with Family Wellbeing Partnership to stay up to date with budget decisions and appraise the impact on the LPP. DWP childcare budgets to be used if no FWB budgets are approved beyond March 2026.	3	3	9
Benefits	Sustaining employment Parents who successfully progress are not able to sustain employment.	3	4	12	Clacks Works will offer up to 52 weeks of key working for participants who successfully progress into higher forms of education and employment. The key work service offered will help parents to overcome challenges that arise when in their new role and allow Clacks Works to signpost to relevant support services or support their change in circumstances.	3	2	6
Benefits	Funding for training and qualifications Flexible Skills funding is not available to support Lone Parents with training that costs over £1000 per person.	3	2	6	Flexible Skills Fund (FSF) as at June 2025 is £100k for 2025/26 and £200k for 2026/27. Project lead will liaise with FSF lead to develop required cases for investment through FSF where LP budget is exhausted.	3	1	3
Financial	Approval Business case approval is delayed and spend profile cannot be achieved as per BJC. 2025-26	4	4	16	SRO to work with the RPMO and government liaison officers to expedite the approval process and subsequent delivery of the LPP in Alloa South & East.	3	2	6

Appendix 6 Risk Register

Likelihood	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	2	3	4	5
Impact						

	Low
	Medium
	High
	Very high

Appendix 7 Financial Case – participation scenarios and costs

Financial scenarios below illustrate the cost and affordability at Real Living Wage and National Living Wage rates.

Scenario	Wage framework	Rate of pay (£/hr)	No of hours per week	No of weeks	Wage costs (£)	Employer NI (£) @15%	Employer Pension (£) @3%	Total wage cost (£)	Industry training budget (max £)	Total cost per person	Number of people supported	Rounded down	Total cost
1	National Living Wage	12.21	5	26	1587	238	48	1,873	1000	2,873	34.8	34	97682
		12.21	10	26	3175	476	95	3,746	1000	4,746	21.1	21	99667
		12.21	15	26	4762	714	143	5,619	1000	6,619	15.1	15	99286
		12.21	20	26	6349	952	190	7,492	1000	8,492	11.8	11	93413
		12.21	25	26	7937	1190	238	9,365	1000	10,365	9.6	9	93286
		12.21	30	26	9524	1429	286	11,238	1000	12,238	8.2	8	97905
2	Real Living Wage	12.6	5	26	1638	246	49	1,933	1000	2,933	34.1	34	99717
		12.6	10	26	3276	491	98	3,866	1000	4,866	20.6	20	97314
		12.6	15	26	4914	737	147	5,799	1000	6,799	14.7	14	95179
		12.6	20	26	6552	983	197	7,731	1000	8,731	11.5	11	96045
		12.6	25	26	8190	1229	246	9,664	1000	10,664	9.4	9	95978
		12.6	30	26	9828	1474	295	11,597	1000	12,597	7.9	7	88179

Financial profile scenarios

1. National Living Wage – affordable for 9 beneficiaries @25hrs per week for 26 weeks.

9 beneficiaries@25hrs across 2 cohorts NLW	Year		Total
Cost description	2025/26	2026/27	
Wage costs - NLW	£39,683	£31,746	£71,429
Employer NI @15%	£5,952	£4,762	£10,714
Employer Pension @3%	£1,190	£952	£2,143
Industry training	£5,000	£4,000	£9,000
Total cost	£51,825	£41,460	£93,286

2. Real Living Wage – affordable for 9 beneficiaries @25hrs per week for 26 weeks.

9 beneficiaries @25hrs across 2 cohorts RLW	Year		Total
Cost description	2025/26	2026/27	
Wage costs - RLW	£40,950	£32,760	£73,710
Employer NI @15%	£6,143	£4,914	£11,057
Employer Pension @3%	£1,229	£983	£2,211
Industry training	£5,000	£4,000	£9,000
Total cost	£53,321	£42,657	£95,978

NB Wage rates used are for participants aged 21 years+ due to demographics of eligible individuals on existing Clacks Works case load.

Appendix 8 LPP roles and responsibilities (delivery)

Stage	Responsibilities	Responsible 'owner'	Support staff
PRE	Identification of eligible and suitable LPs	Clacks Works Key Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DWP - Comm orgs / 3rd sector – employability, family support services - Clacks CLD team
PRE	Referral - Financial checks for identified LPs	Clacks Works Key Workers	Citizens Advice
PRE	Preparatory programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination across KW team - Coordination across any 3rd parties involved (if applicable) - Coordination / engagement with LPs - Delivery of programme 	Child Poverty Coordinator	Clacks Works Job Brokers Clacks CLD team
PRE	Monitoring progress and outcomes of prep programme	Child Poverty Coordinator	Team Leader Economic Development
PRE	Identification of suitable paid placements, negotiating terms and pattern of attendance.	Clacks Works Job Brokers	Child Poverty Coordinator
PRE	Identification of advantageous training related to the paid placement	Clacks Works Job Brokers	Child Poverty Coordinator
PRE	Matching process for LPs with paid placements	Clacks Works Job Brokers	Clacks Works Key Workers
PRE	Identify childcare requirements and options	Clacks Works Key Workers	Family Wellbeing Partnership
DURING	In placement support – link for employer and LP into Clacks Works	Clacks Works Job Brokers	Clacks Works Key Workers
DURING	In placement education / skill development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of advantageous training – both LP and employer led Supporting LPs to access training	Clacks Works Job Brokers	Clacks Works Key Workers CRD Flexible Skills
DURING	Placement check-in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LP, Employer and Clacks Works - Identification of further training - Support any emerging challenges - Managing employer agreement Wk1 phone call with employer Wk 4 check in LP and employer Wk 13 check in LP and employer End of placement check in LP and employer	Clacks Works Job Brokers	Clacks Works Key Workers Child Poverty Coordinator
DURING	Employability support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goal setting - CVs and application forms - Mock interviews 	Clacks Works Key Workers	Clacks Works Job Brokers
DURING	Identification and provide support for Employer Recruitment Incentives available to local businesses	Clacks Works Job Brokers	CRD Flexible Skills
POST	Aftercare support – Parental Employability	Clacks Works Key Workers	Clacks Works Job Brokers Family Wellbeing Partnership
ALL	Oversight of LP project, challenges, monitoring and coordination across team	Child Poverty Coordinator	Team Leader Economic Development

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Screening

Title of Policy:	City Region Deal – Lone Parent Programme
Service:	Place
Team:	Economic Development

Will the policy have to go to Council or committee for approval	Yes/No
Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?	No
Does it relate to functions that previous involvement activities have identified as being important to particular protected groups?	Yes
Does it relate to an area where the Council has set equality outcomes?	Yes
Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?	Yes
Does it relate to a policy where there is significant potential for reducing inequalities or improving outcomes?	Yes

IF YES TO ANY - Move on to an Equality & Fairer Scotland Assessment

IF NO - Explain why an Equality & Fairer Scotland Assessment is not required

APPROVAL		
NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE
Alison Davidson	Economic Development	31.03.25

NB This screening exercise is not to be treated as an assessment of impact and therefore does not need to be published. However, if you decide not to assess the impact of any policy, you will have to be able to explain your decision. To do this, you should keep a full record of how you reached your decision.

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Scoping

Purpose of the proposed policy or changes to established policy
<p>The lone parent programme seeks to target unemployed lone parents living in Alloa South & East and provide them with paid work experience, improve their qualification and skill level and support them into employment or further/higher education.</p> <p>This programme is an additional offer that addresses a gap in employability support for lone parents and builds on similar successful programmes.</p>
Which aspects of the policy are particularly relevant to each element of the Council's responsibilities in relation to the General Equality Duty and the Fairer Scotland Duty?
General Equality Duty -
<p>➤ Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct</p>
<p>N/A</p>
<p>➤ Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not</p>
<p>The Lone Parent Programme will target unemployed lone parents living in Alloa South and East to tackle barriers to employment and advance the economic opportunities available to them. The targeted support will provide an enhanced offer due to their status as a lone parent to increase the likelihood of securing and sustaining employment enabling them to increase their household earnings in the future.</p> <p>The project is more likely to support improved outcomes for female lone parents, improving their ability to earn higher wages..</p>
<p>➤ Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</p>
<p>N/A</p>
Fairer Scotland Duty -
<p>➤ Reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage</p>
<p>The Lone Parent Programme will target unemployed lone parents living in Alloa South & East to reduce poverty related inequalities including health, caused by socioeconomic disadvantage.</p> <p>The targeted support will provide an enhanced offer due to their status as a lone parent to increase the likelihood of securing and sustaining employment enabling them to increase their household earnings in the future.</p>

To which of the equality groups is the policy relevant?		
Protected Characteristic	Yes/No*	Explanation
Age	No	
Disability	No	
Gender Reassignment	No	
Marriage and civil partnership	Yes	The Lone Parent Programme tackles barriers faced by lone parents due to the disproportionate inequalities they face when compared with two parent families (including those in civil partnerships and married).
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes	The Lone Parent Programme supports people who have had children and are seeking employment whilst caring for their dependents (children under 18 years).
Race	No	
Religion and Belief	No	
Sex	Yes	<p>Females working in Clackmannanshire experience, on average, lower earnings than males.¹</p> <p>92% of lone parent families in Scotland are headed by women so it can be assumed that the rise in lone parent families on Universal Credit in Alloa South & East and gender pay gap is disproportionately affecting female lone parents which compounds the challenges they face when entering and sustaining employment.²</p>
Sexual Orientation	No	

* Delete as required

¹ ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Resident Analysis, 2024.

² Tackling Child Poverty Priority Families Overview, Scottish Government, 2024.

What evidence is already available about the needs of relevant groups, and where are the gaps in evidence?

Growth in lone parents on Universal Credit in Clackmannanshire

There has been a 41% increase in the percentage of single parents on Universal Credit across Clackmannanshire from 2021 - 2024. Alloa South and East represents the local area with the greatest number of lone parents claiming Universal Credit (313).³

Single, with children	January 2021	January 2022	January 2023 (r)	January 2024 (p)	% diff
Alloa North	125	146	174	198	58.4%
Alloa South and East	219	242	291	313	42.9%
Alloa West	54	61	68	76	40.7%
Alva	123	135	139	155	26.0%
Clackmannan, Kennet and Forestmill	111	129	137	147	32.4%
Dollar and Muckhart	24	25	27	35	45.8%
Fishcross, Devon Village and Coalsnaughton	51	62	69	68	33.3%
Menstrie	23	32	53	56	143.5%
Sauchie	184	204	219	236	28.3%
Tillicoultry	112	116	124	147	31.3%
Tullibody North and Glenochil	149	179	192	212	42.3%
Tullibody South	106	113	136	153	44.3%
Total	1284	1449	1631	1812	41.1%

Lone parents who wish to return to employment after having children often have a gap in their work history as they have been caring for their families. This can lead to them competing for employment against people who have a full work history and who also may not require the flexibilities that they need to be a working parent which can compound the challenge when applying for local jobs.

Qualifications and working life

An analysis of Clackmannanshire Works case load data for eligible lone parents has shown that on average individuals have spent 26% of their working life (post 18 years) in employment. In addition, the analysis showed that the higher the qualification level held by lone parents, the higher the proportion of time spent in employment. This ranged from 6% for those with no qualifications to 54% for those with SCQF equivalent of 7/8.

Child poverty and health related inequalities

Lone parents are at higher risk of poverty, in-work poverty, food and financial insecurity⁴ and are less likely to report being in 'very good' or 'good' general health compared with two parent families.⁵ Children born to parents living in poverty are more likely to experience poor health later in life, are more likely to have poor mental health and are at higher risk of psychological distress.⁶

As reported by Public Health Scotland, paid employment has the potential to improve health and reduce health inequalities by providing higher incomes and meeting social and psychological needs.⁷

³ [People Community Wellbeing Plan 2024-2025](#), Clackmannanshire Council, August 2024.

⁴ [Briefing on Single Parents Lived Experience, One Parent Families Scotland, 2020](#).

⁵ <https://www.scotpho.org.uk/media/1157/scotpho161123-lone-parents-scotland-gb-uk.pdf>

⁶ [Effects of Poverty, Child Poverty Action Group](#)

⁷ ['Why employment matters for health', Public Health Scotland](#)

Almost a third (31%) of children in Clackmannanshire are in workless households, which is the third highest rate in Scotland. In 2022-23 there were 2855 children aged 0 – 15 years living in relative low-income households, an increase of 760 children (36%) since 2016-17. 65% of children in were lone parent households.⁸

Evidence of barriers to employment

Consultation with lone parents and third sector support services raised the following barriers to employment which have been considered and mitigated within the programme design:

- Access to affordable childcare
- Logistics associated with childcare and distance to employment
- Qualification levels and relevant training
- Gaps in work history
- Flexibility of employers and agreeing tailored working patterns
- Advocacy – knowing and understanding their employment rights
- Managing change

Data gaps

Data from DWP on the number of lone parents living in Alloa South & East who are required to actively seek employment (based on the age of their child/children) is not available. The programme has been designed considering the 'supply' of individuals that are eligible and actively seeking employment. This was based on Clackmannanshire Council's Clacks Works caseload data.

Which equality groups and communities might it be helpful to involve in the development of the policy?

Parents and lone parents accessing Community Learning and Development services in Alloa South & East were consulted as part of the programme development.

Third sector agencies listed below were consulted as part of the programme development:

- Home Start Clackmannanshire
- Clackmannanshire Women's Aid
- Resilience Learning Partnership
- Community House Alloa

These stakeholders will be involved as the project moves into delivery to ensure that the opportunity reaches lone parents that they support who are not already in receipt of employability support from the Council. The project will link to these organisations when in delivery if participants require additional support through community based provision or wrap around care.

Next steps

⁸ [People Community Wellbeing Plan 2024-2025](#), Clackmannanshire Council, August 2024.

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Decision

Evidence findings

Evidence highlights that lone parents face economic and health related inequalities due to the additional barriers they face when competing for and sustaining employment. Major barriers include affordable childcare, flexible workplace policies and work patterns and gaps in qualifications and work experience.

The Lone Parent Programme will remove these barriers for lone parents enabling them to increase their skills and qualifications, provide them with up-to-date work experience of relevance to the local labour market and provide them with personalised support during and up to 52 weeks after the programme concludes.

Details of engagement undertaken and feedback received

Parents and lone parents accessing Community Learning and Development services in Alloa South & East were consulted as part of the programme development.

Third sector agencies listed below were consulted as part of the programme development:

- Home Start Clackmannanshire
- Clackmannanshire Women's Aid
- Resilience Learning Partnership
- Community House Alloa

Parent Feedback

Unfair treatment of parents

Fear of employer knowing that they are a parent/lone parent – worried about unconscious or conscious bias during recruitment processes.

Fear of employers being unsupportive or letting them go if they need to take children/young people to the doctors or for appointments. Unsure of what they are entitled to in order to support their dependent with health-related matters as and when required.

Working patterns

Finding work that can be accommodated during the school day – the school holidays and in service days were raised as a stressful time with the cost of childcare if in work as a major barrier. Interest in school-based jobs to alleviate this problem.

There was mention of limitations for parents caring for young adults with disabilities. Work patterns would need to fit in with available respite and can be very limited.

Advocating for themselves

Knowing their rights, being intimidated by people in charge and feeling like they cannot and shouldn't be asking for flexibility or where the employer makes unreasonable requests that they can't accommodate.

There was support for the key worker to be an advocate and act as a mediator between the employer and parent to ensure that they are being treated fairly and to be responsive to the needs of the parent should they feel they require additional support or someone to talk to about a problem they are facing during/with their placement.

Managing change

There was support for a preplacement programme to help people 'get their heads into thinking about them' and to help parents understand what potential options are available to them in the local area. It could be a big jump for parents to go from not working straight into a busy working week and they might not be able to cope.

There was a lot of talk of low confidence and needing to believe that they have skills to do well as well as meeting other parents in the same position.

Nursery and wrap around care (school based)

Parents disclosed having to give up work (skilled roles) due to lack of childcare coupled with inflexible employers. These parents have no grandparents or wider family to rely on and so leaving employment was the only way to be able to manage the school day for their child. Some schools have no after school clubs so this highlights the advantage of the 10 – 2pm type roles if available.

Training

There was a mix of starting points regarding skills but in general the feeling was that if training was to be out with the placement hours, then this could be difficult to coordinate but it depended on the details. There was positive feedback in relation to being able to access training through the project.

Third sector support service feedback

Third sector support agency feedback highlighted that this is a positive intervention and welcomed the targeted support.

Queries were raised regarding the challenges related with initial payments required for travel and childcare as DWP require payment to be made upfront and claimed retrospectively. The Clackmannanshire Family Wellbeing Partnership funding will support this to remove this barrier to engagement ensuring that there are no up front costs incurred by the participants.

Third sector services would welcome working together to identify eligible lone parents who are not accessing Clacks Works already and supporting a community-based transition into key work services offered by the Council ahead of the Lone Parent Programme commencing.

Decision/recommendation

Having considered the potential or actual impacts of this policy, the following decision/ recommendation is made:

Tick**Option 1: No major change**

The assessment demonstrates that the policy is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that all opportunities have been taken to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.

Option 2: Adjust the policy – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality or to foster good relations. It may be possible to remove or change the aspect of the policy that creates any negative or unwanted impact, or to introduce additional measures to reduce or mitigate any potential negative impact.

Option 3: Continue the policy – this means adopting or continuing with the policy, despite the potential for adverse impact. The justification should clearly set out how this decision is compatible with the Council's obligations under the duty.

Option 4: Stop and remove the policy – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, consideration should be given to stopping the policy altogether. If a policy leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.

Justification for decision

The LPP will seek to directly target people experiencing inequalities and advance opportunities for those facing exclusion from the labour market with demonstrated evidence of need.

APPROVAL

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE
Alison Davidson	Economic Development	31.03.25

**REQUEST FOR A LIMITED EXCEPTION TO THE REAL LIVING WAGE
CONDITION FOR GRANTS**

A grant funder may wish to use this template, to allow an organisation to request a limited exception to the real Living Wage condition for part(s) or all of its workforce. It should be considered alongside the supporting guidance on limited exceptions to the real Living Wage condition in public sector grants.

The request for such an exception relates only to the grant being applied for and, if approved by a senior authorising/accountable officer of the funder, will be valid for only that grant.

Grounds for a limited exception: where an organisation genuinely cannot afford to pay the real Living Wage to part(s) or all of its workforce, a limited exception to that grant condition may be requested, with suitable evidence provided regarding the organisation's current financial position, the costs of uprating the pay of that part (or parts) of the workforce, and any consequential or additional costs. Where an organisation's request for an exception to the real Living Wage condition for part(s) or all of its workforce is approved, the organisation would still be expected to work towards payment of the real Living Wage to the entire workforce within a reasonable timescale.

There should be no assumption that approval of an exception is a guarantee of grant nor that all individual grants will be awarded, as other factors will be taken into account, particularly in relation to competitive grants. Where an organisation applies for multiple grants, it may use the same case for a limited exception, however it should not be assumed that approval for a limited exception for one grant will mean approval for another, as these decisions are taken on a case by case basis. Should a grant recipient wish to seek an exception for repeat funding, it will be required to re-submit a request for consideration by the relevant grant funder.

Please note that this template only seeks to assess the affordability of the requirement for the applicant organisation, it does not consider the objectives of individual grants.

PART A is to be completed by the organisation

PART B is to be completed by a senior authorising/accountable officer of the funder

60

REQUEST FOR A LIMITED EXCEPTION TO THE REAL LIVING WAGE CONDITION FOR GRANTS

PART A

Name of organisation seeking a limited exception	
--	--

The case for an exception must address but need not be limited to the following points. Each case will be assessed on the basis of affordability of the requirement for the applicant organisation.

(1) Define which part(s) of the workforce the organisation is requesting a limited exception for, e.g. apprentices, 16-17 year olds.	
(2) Detail the current size of the overall workforce.	
(3) Detail number of workers currently in each part(s) of the workforce identified at (1).	
(4) Detail the wage rates for each part(s) of the workforce identified at (1).	
(5) Explain why meeting the conditionality for the part(s) of the workforce identified at (1) is genuinely unaffordable and provide suitable evidence regarding the organisation’s current financial position, the costs of uprating the pay of that part (or parts) of the workforce, and any consequential or additional costs. Please limit responses to 1 page of A4 max.	
(6) Outline the action the organisation will take towards meeting the rLW condition for the part(s) of the workforce identified at (1) and the related timescales. Please limit responses to 1 page of A4 max.	

Signed by:
(Relevant finance or HR officer for the organisation)

Name and position:

Details for a lead contact:

(should the funder need to discuss this request)

PART B

Decision regarding the request for an exception

On behalf of [the funding organisation],

- 1. *I approve the above request for a limited exception to meeting the real Living Wage condition for part(s) or all of the workforce identified in Part A for the grant.
- 2. *I decline the request for a limited exception to meeting the real Living Wage condition for part(s) or all of the workforce identified in Part A for the grant. The reason for this decision is noted below.

(*delete as appropriate)

Reason for a request for a limited exception being declined
--

Signed by:
(senior authorising/accountable officer for the funder)

Name and position:

Completed Requests for a Limited Exception form is to be submitted to: [the relevant funder email address]



REPORT

Joint Committee 19th June 2025

Agenda Item 5.2

Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal – Annual Report 2024-2025

Executive Summary

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal is pleased to present the 2024-2025 Annual Report which covers the period April 2024 until the end of March 2025. The report brings to life and summaries the progress made across the Deal portfolio by Deal partners Stirling Council, Clackmannanshire Council, and the University of Stirling.

This report seeks approval from Joint Committee members on the 2024/2025 version of the Annual report and outlines the next steps leading to its publication.

Author

Lena Schelling, Senior Programme Manager, Regional Programme Management Office (RPMO)

schellingl@stirling.gov.uk



Recommendations

Joint Committee members are asked to:

1. To consider the content of the Annual Report 2024/25 and approve this for publication, subject to any final recommendations for amendment.

Implications

In line with CRD Governance, Partners of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Regional Deal publish an Annual Report evidencing the progress made in the 6 different investment areas of the Deal:

1. Transport Connectivity and Low Carbon
2. Innovation
3. Skills & Inclusion
4. Infrastructure
5. Culture, Heritage & Tourism
6. Digital

Legal & Risk Implications and Mitigation

None.

Background

- This Annual Report builds on the previous Annual Report 23/24, providing readers with updates on progress from across the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Regional Deal portfolio, covering the time period from April 2024 into the first three months of 2025.
- Feedback has been sought from all three partner organisations (including project leads), the Senior Responsible Officers, Chief Officers and Joint Committee members.
- Amendments have been made to reflect feedback from partners and the updated final version of the Annual Report has been attached as an appendix to this report.
- The Stirling Council Communications and Engagement Team have led on the graphic design of this report.



Timeline & Drafting Process

- The report has been drafted by the RPMO and circulated amongst partners for review, with drafts being shared with the Chief Officers Group March 2025, April 2025 and May 2025. The report was also shared with members of the Joint Committee in April 2025.
- The report was submitted for review by UK and Scottish Government colleagues, ahead of the Annual Conversation 8th May 2025.
- In accordance with CRD Governance arrangements and following the approval from the Chief Officers Group and the two Governments, we now seek the final approval on this Annual Report by members of the Joint Committee, to enable its publication June/July 2025.

Considerations

In line with the existing CRD Governance Framework, the RPMO has produced an Annual Report on all City Region Deal activity, to demonstrate the alignment of the City Region Deal programme to the agreed vision and four strategic outcomes.

Resource Implications

Financial Details

The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report.

This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate.

Yes ✓

Finance Officers have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report.

Yes ✓

Staffing

The full implications on staffing are set out in the report.

N/A ✓

Exempt Reports

Is this report exempt?

No ✓

Equalities Impact

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

N/A ✓



Legality

It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Joint Committee is acting within its legal powers.

Yes ✓

Sustainability and Environmental

It has been confirmed that sustainability and environmental issues have been considered within the report.

Yes ✓

Policy Implications

None

Consultations

N/A.

Background Papers

Have you used other documents to compile your report?

Yes ✓

1. V.014_Stirling_Clacks_CRD_Governance Framework.docx
2. Heads of Terms ScotGovt.pdf
3. Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Regional Deal – Annual Report 23/24.

Review and Next Steps

- Publication of the report is expected June/July 2025, following Joint Committee approval.

Appendix

1. Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Annual Report 2024/25.



67

Stirling &
Clackmannanshire
City Region Deal

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Annual Report 2024-25



Stirling &
Clackmannanshire
City Region Deal

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STIRLING



**Clackmannanshire
Council**



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Contents

1	Summary	2	C	Skills & Inclusion Programme	42
2	Foreword	6		Flexible Skills	42
3	City Region Deal Overview	8		Inclusion Workers and Investment Fund	44
4	Geographical Overview	10		Clackmannanshire Lone Parents Programme	47
5	Financial Statement	12	D	Infrastructure	49
6	Deal Governance and Management	16		Ministry of Defence Land at Forthside	49
7	Benefits Realisation Plan	18	E	Culture, Heritage & Tourism	51
8	Progress to Date	28		Developing Culture, Heritage and Tourism Assets	50
				Japanese Gardens	53
	CRD Programme		F	Digital	55
A	Transport Connectivity and Low Carbon	30		Stirling Digital Hub	55
	Active Travel Routes Programme	30		Regional Digital Hubs	56
	Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling	32		Regional Digital Hubs - Cowie	57
	Regional Energy Masterplan	34		Regional Digital Hubs - Callander	58
B	Innovation	36		Regional Digital Hubs - Clackmannanshire	59
	The National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub (NATIH)	36	9	Looking Back	60
	Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC) Phase 1	38	10	The Year Ahead	61
	SIEC phase 2 & Intergenerational Living Innovation Hub	40	11	Glossary	65

1 Summary



Date Deal Signed

26th February 2020



£90.2 million

Government Funding Allocation

£3.14m

Total claimed in 2024/25



£34.68m

Total claimed to date



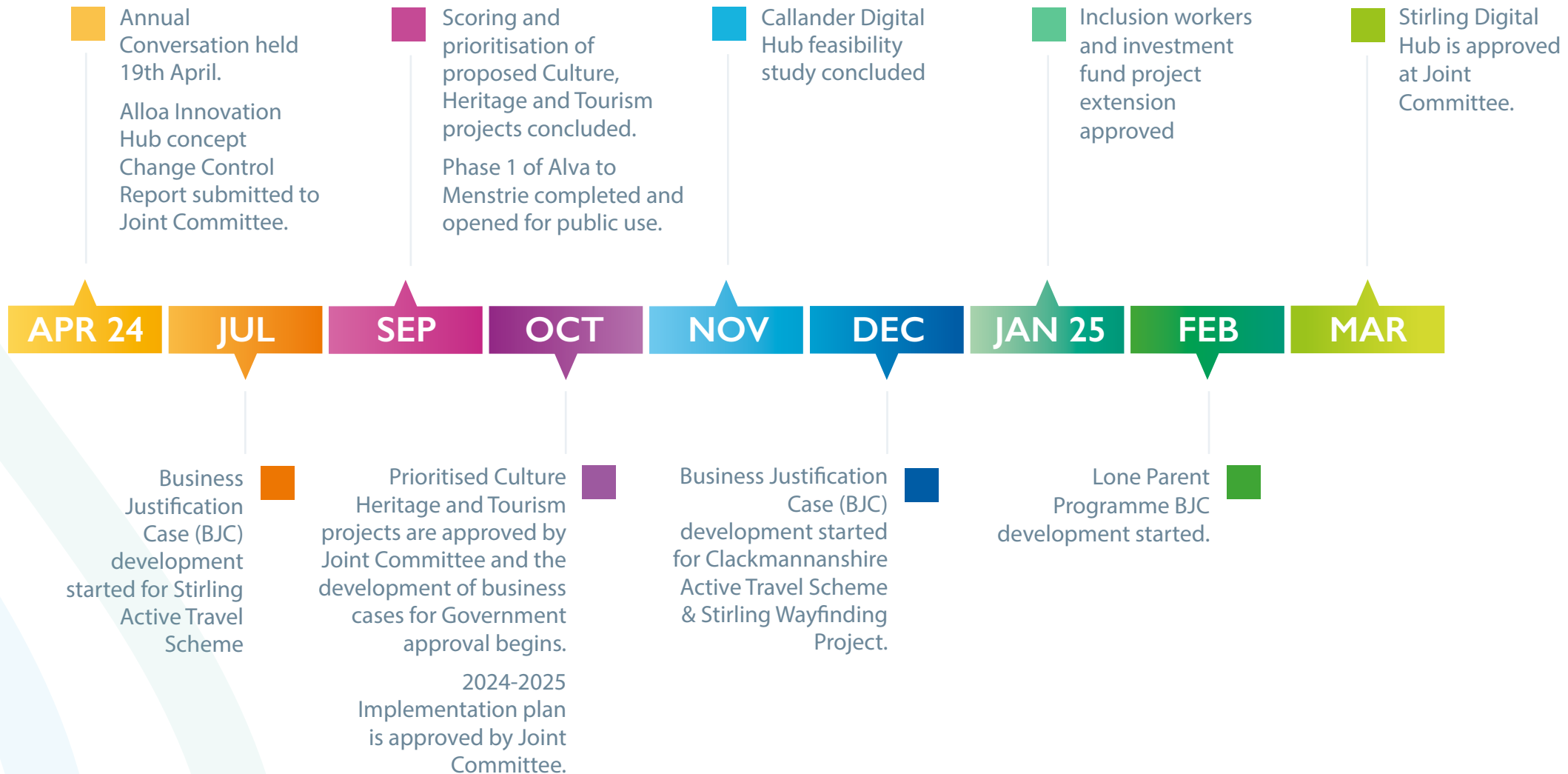


82 jobs
created



**4 Projects in
implementation/delivery**
5 projects completed

Timeline 2024-25





Japanese Gardens outreach and education team activities during 24/25, and the new outreach building

2 Foreword

We are pleased to introduce the 2024-25 Annual Report of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal. Since signing the Deal in February 2020, we have made steady progress in the delivery of our projects and programmes within the six thematic areas. Celebrating our fifth year and halfway point of the Deal, the partnership looks forward to achieving more key milestones in the year ahead and delivering positive outcomes for the people of Stirling and Clackmannanshire. This year's report covers the period April 2024 until end of March 2025.

The Deal's innovation theme activities aim to drive growth through supporting a thriving knowledge economy across the Forth Valley. Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC) aims to build a global exemplar of a net zero regional economy. Development of its world-first environmental infrastructure that will harnesses inward investment is well underway, alongside efforts to engage and upskill the region's communities with the skills and ambition to seize opportunities presented by the transition to a more sustainable economy.

Likewise, construction of the National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub (NATIH) - which will cement the region's position in the vanguard of one of the world's fastest growing sectors - passed several significant milestones and remains on course for completion in winter 2025. Together with the developing plans for the Intergenerational Living Innovation Hub, these projects will support jobs and prosperity through responding to major global challenges.

In our digital infrastructure theme, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils continue to make strides in enhancing digital infrastructure across the region. A key initiative in this area is the development of Regional Digital Hubs. These hubs are being strategically located in Cowie, Callander and Alloa to serve communities across The Forth Valley. With the Cowie Digital Hub completed and open to the public, construction is expected to start on the Stirling Digital Hub in Autumn of 2025 following approval of the Business Case by Joint Committee in March 2025.

Under our transport and connectivity theme, we continue to expand our strategic network of Active Travel schemes, enhancing transport connectivity, promoting low carbon initiatives and boosting economic activity within the region. Following the opening of Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling, which has created two new cycling, walking and wheeling corridors of more than 6.9 km across the city, two other routes are scheduled to move to delivery stage this year: Dunblane to Causewayhead and Fishcross to the University of Stirling. Both of these await approval at our Joint Committee later in the year. These transport corridors will connect communities in the region and open up access to destinations such as workplaces and businesses, schools, further and higher education settings, public transport hubs and visitor attractions.

In the culture and tourism theme, the completed project of the Japanese Gardens at Cowden, remains a popular tourist attraction for residents and visitors, who have praised the serene and picturesque environment.

Through the £750,000 investment from the City Region Deal, the Gardens have been restored to a high standard and are popular for daytrips and a wide range of cultural events. We continue to monitor and evaluate the benefits the gardens are contributing to the area and are delighted that annual targets of 25,000 visitors have been exceeded with over 49,000 people visiting the gardens this year.

As we approach the middle of 2025, we are committed to working together to ensure new projects coming into delivery in the rest of the year and beyond are propelled forwards through robust and strategic business case development. While good progress continues to be made on a number of projects, we must remain ready to respond to changes in the external landscape to maximise the benefits of the Deal, including the creation of higher-value jobs, attracting inward investment and developing centres of excellence.

We continue to press forward with our programme in the next 12 months driven by a determination to continue unlocking the benefits of the Deal and make a real difference to the people, communities and businesses of Stirling and Clackmannanshire.



**Councillor
Ellen Forson, Leader**
Clackmannanshire
Council



**Councillor
Gerry McGarvey, Leader**
Stirling Council



**Professor
Sir Gerry McCormac**
Principal and Vice-Chancellor,
The University of Stirling

City Region Deal Overview

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal is an exciting package of investment in innovation, infrastructure and skills intended to drive inclusive economic growth to the city region. The UK Government and Scottish Government will each invest £45.1 million over the lifetime of the ten-year programme. In conjunction with this Government investment, regional partners will invest up to £123.8 million, realising a Deal worth £214 million for Stirling and Clackmannanshire. City Region partners have an ambition that the interventions created by this investment will help regional partners build on their existing strengths and ensure the region is able to deliver on its vision.

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal partnership is driven by Stirling Council, Clackmannanshire Council, the University of Stirling, the Scottish Government and UK Government. The investment offered, by Scottish and UK Governments through the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal, is expected to act as a catalyst and accelerator for our ambitious programme. It is designed to unlock investment from within our region and beyond.

Theme	No of programmes /projects	Total Government Investment
Transport, Connectivity and Low Carbon	3	£7,200,000
Innovation	4	£56,250,000
Skills and Inclusion	3	£2,000,000
Infrastructure	1	£5,000,000
Culture, Heritage and Tourism	2	£15,750,000
Digital	4	£4,000,000



The interventions and approaches within the Deal will deliver inclusive growth to benefit the people and communities across Stirling and Clackmannanshire.

The Deal was signed on 26th February 2020, and this annual report will summarise the progress made in the financial year April 2024 – March 2025. The Deal is based around six themes designed to deliver programmes and projects to deliver the four strategic outcomes.

Widen access to opportunity through inclusive skills pathways that target those who face exclusion across our region.

Create conditions for businesses to thrive both locally and globally, increase job density and access to opportunity, maximising our regional assets.

Remove barriers to engagement and support inclusion to share prosperity and wellbeing across the region.

Invest in the creation of clean, green innovations, digital entrepreneurship and cultural opportunities to deliver a more diverse regional economy.



4

Geographical Overview

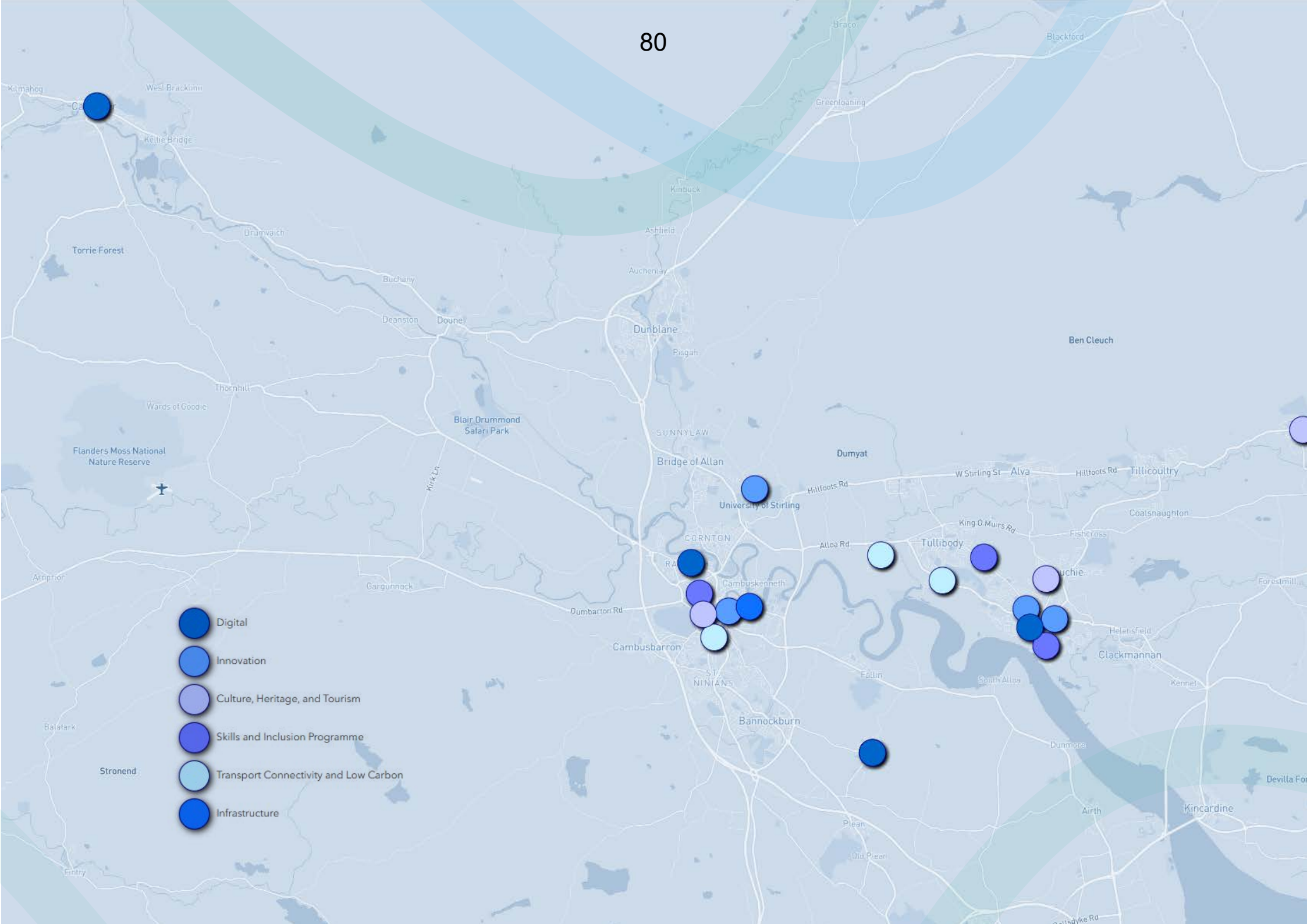
The Stirling and Clackmannanshire city region is at the heart of Scotland, with it often being referred to as Scotland in miniature. Natural beauty abounds, with the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park to the West, the silvery River Forth to the South and the majestic Ochil Hills rising in the North.

The City Region consists of two local authority areas and has a combined population of approximately 145,000 people. The City Region contributes over £3.6 billion per year to the Scottish and UK economies, with the main economic sectors including tourism, retail, manufacturing and agriculture. It is also home to the University of Stirling, one of Scotland's leading higher educational institutions, and the campuses of Forth Valley College.

The Deal also looks beyond the region, to link up with other Growth Deals including the Tay Cities Deal, Edinburgh and Southeast Scotland City Region Deal and the Glasgow City Region Deal. Similarly, through the University of Stirling, links have been established with the Ayrshire and Argyll & Bute Growth Deals. There are also emerging connections between the Falkirk Growth Deal and our own, which follow the Falkirk Growth Deal signing. The Regional Programme Management Office is fully integrated into the City and Growth Deal network, where good practice is shared and connections are made to support cumulative benefits.



80



5

Financial Statement

The overall Deal is worth £214 million, with investment of £45.1 million from Scottish Government, £45.1 million from UK Government and a further £123.8 million funding from third party partners. Table 1 (on p13) shows the Financial Summary by project for the Deal, based on the most up-to-date financial information.

As can be seen from the table 1, the main projects to draw down funding are the National Aquaculture and Innovation Hub (NATIH), Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC) Phase 1, Walk Cycle Live Stirling, as well as our Inclusion Workers and Investment Fund and our Flexible Skills Programme.

More of this funding will become fully secured as more business cases are approved, and more projects move into delivery. Table 2 (on p14) shows the Financial Summary by project for the Deal, based on the most up-to-date financial information for the financial year 2024-25.



Table 1 – Overall Funding Breakdown

Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Financial Summary						
Project	Scottish Government £	UK Government £	Regional Partners £	Other Partners £	Commercial Partners £	Total £
Total Transport, Connectivity & Low Carbon	7,239,000	0	325,000	19,439,000	0	27,003,000
Active Travel Routes	4,500,000	0	0	10,719,000	0	15,219,000
Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling	2,539,000	0	325,000	8,720,000	0	11,584,000
Energy Master Planning	200,000	0	0	0	0	200,000
Total Innovation	9,704,000	39,250,000	6,584,000	1,000,000	25,643,833	82,181,833
The National Aquaculture Technology & Innovation Hub (NATIH)	0	17,000,000	6,544,000	1,000,000	5,133,833	29,677,833
Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC)	9,704,000	5,000,000	0	0	10,722,000	25,426,000
Intergenerational Living Innovation Hub (ILIH)	0	7,250,000	0	0	9,788,000	17,038,000
Replacement Innovation Project	0	10,000,000	40,000	0	0	10,040,000
Total Skills & Inclusion	1,900,000	100,000	0	313,000	0	2,313,000
Flexible Skills	1,503,000	0	0	0	0	1,503,000
Inclusion Workers & Investment Fund	397,000	0	0	313,000	0	710,000
Clackmannanshire Lone Parents Programme	0	100,000	0	0	0	100,000
Total Infrastructure	0	5,000,000	0	16,100,000	0	21,100,000
Ministry of Defence Land at Forthside	0	5,000,000	0	16,100,000	0	21,100,000
Total Culture, Heritage & Tourism	15,000,000	750,000	1,000,000	362,000	786,000	17,898,000
Developing Cultural, Heritage & Tourism Assets	15,000,000	0	1,000,000	0	0	16,000,000
Japanese Gardens	0	750,000	0	362,000	786,000	1,898,000
Total Digital	4,000,000	0	241,000	1,352,000	0	5,593,000
Stirling Digital Hub	2,000,000	0	0	0	0	2,000,000
Regional Digital Hub	2,000,000	0	241,000	1,352,000	0	3,593,000
Grand Total	£37,843,000	£45,100,000	£8,150,000	£38,566,000	£26,429,833	£156,088,833

Table 2 – Financial Drawdown Summary

Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Claim position for 2024-25		
Project	Grant Claim Totals (£000's)	Grant Available Totals (£000's)
Innovation		
National Aquaculture Technology & Innovation Hub (NATIH)	9,743,000	
Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC)	3,169,00	2,614,000
Skills & Inclusion		
Flexible Skills	200,000	68,000
Inclusion Workers & Investment Fund	76,612	115,000
Infrastructure		
Ministry of Defence Land at Forthside	5,000,000	
Grand Total	£15,019,612	£13,095,000



6 Deal Governance and Management

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal has been in operation since February 2020, underpinned by a suite of governance documents which facilitate management of the programme. The Joint Committee has the ultimate say over key strategic decision-making required to support the Deal and the wider strategy. The Joint Committee is comprised of elected members from Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils and senior representatives from the University of Stirling, providing a diverse range of views and ensuring representation from across the partnership.

The Regional Programme Management Office (RPMO) meets the UK Government and Scottish Government on a fortnightly basis to discuss progress as well as quarterly to review performance and plan ahead for future activity.



The governance structure of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal is illustrated in the diagram below:



7

Benefits Realisation Plan



One aim of the City Region Deal investment is to deliver sustainable new employment opportunities across a range of sectors as well as unlocking private investment. Every effort is being made to maximise the benefits from the Deal's projects. A key aspect of managing the Deal is the development of a benefits realisation plan to ensure close monitoring of the benefits being realised.

The following tables on *p19 - p24* summarise the progress that has been made in realising some of the key benefits for projects which are either completed or in delivery. Data included is in reference to the 2024-2025 financial year, unless otherwise specified.

Japanese Gardens - Benefits Realisation

Outcome		Detail	Target	24/25 Total
1	Visitors	The Japanese Garden will sustain significantly higher visitor numbers than set out in the original business plan. The garden will secure at least 25,000 visits each year, 375,000 visits over the next 15 years.	25,000 visitors per annum	49,628 visitors
2	Restoration	The Tea House and surrounding area will be restored, recreating the Garden's original boathouse (before the 2022 season). At least half of all visitors to the JG will engage with interactive displays and events based at the tea house.	12,500 visitors to the Tea House per annum	All visitors to the garden access the Tea House, which is open all day. (49,628 visitors)
3	Employment Opportunities	The Japanese Garden will be able to sustain at least 30 employment opportunities each year (including seasonal workers), at least 450 person-years of employment over 15 years.	30 employment opportunities per annum	32 employment opportunities
4a	Shared Prosperity Agenda	The Japanese Garden will work closely with City Region Deal partners to ensure that all the 450 person-years of employment opportunities (over 15 years) are considered within the shared prosperity agenda and inclusive skills ecosystem.		The Japanese Garden provides employment opportunities for underrepresented groups, is a flexible employer, provides training and the garden is fully accessible.
5a	Volunteering, Learning and Work Experience Opportunities	The Japanese Garden will provide at least 500 volunteering, learning and work experience opportunities each year (7,500 opportunities over 15 years). This includes regular garden volunteers, horticultural & work experience students, an extended commitment to focused local community outreach and special interest group activities, as well as a structured programme for school group engagement.	500 opportunities per annum	2606 opportunities
5b	Volunteering, Learning and Work Experience Opportunities	The Japanese Garden will secure 1,200 volunteer hours each year (18,000 hours over 15 years).	1,200 volunteer hours per annum	747 volunteer hours

Japanese Gardens - Benefits Realisation

Outcome		Detail	Target	Total
6	Sustainable Development	Sustainable development will be placed at the heart of the Japanese Garden. Buildings and facilities will be developed with most building materials from sustainable sources from within Scotland. This approach will be embedded in procurement and confirmed in project reports.*	-	26 local suppliers
7a	Regional Partnerships	Over the 15 years of the City Region Deal the Japanese Garden will maintain 70 active regional partnerships (including regional businesses, tourism organisations and events to raise the profile of the region). Active partnerships will be maintained through events and activities at the Garden.	Maintain 70 Regional Partnerships over 15 years	35
7b	Special Events	Over the 15 years of the City Region Deal the Japanese Garden will hold at least 10 special events each year (150 over 15 years) including weddings, other ceremonies and festivals. This will help to showcase the natural assets of the city region and build repeat tourism.	Host 10 special events per annum	56

*Note: All totals for the Japanese Gardens with the exception of Outcome 6, are what has been achieved in the 24/25 financial year. Outcome 6 is a cumulative total.

SIEC Phase 1 – Benefits Realisation

Data for SIEC Phase 1 benefits is cumulative since the launch of SIEC.

Outcome	Detail	Target	Total
1	Support organisations enabling the development of innovative environmental, low carbon technologies, products and services.	300 by 2035	32
2	Support entrepreneurs to develop cutting edge environmental and low carbon products and services.	100 by 2035	14
3	Adopt progressive procurement practices spending at least 38% of SIEC operating costs within the city region.	38% by 2035	-
4	Create jobs within the city region encouraging Fair Work practices.	125 by 2035	38
5	Develop industry led collaborations to co-produce innovative environmental management and low carbon solutions.	100 by 2035	13
6	Support organisations in the city region to reduce their net carbon emissions.	300 by 2035	54
7	Support people to engage in the SIEC skills portfolio enabling access to accredited training in Net Zero related subjects including environmental management, sustainability and Data Driven Innovation.	8805 by 2035	118
8	Provide skills and training opportunities targeting underrepresented groups in the city region Supporting women and people with a disability.	4403 and 1799 by 2035	12
9	Provide inspiring opportunities for employability, school, college and university students to engage with industry on their journey to employment.	948 by 2035	173

Ministry of Defence, Forthside – Benefits Realisation agreed within CRD

Outcome	Detail	Target
1	Direct Land Value Uplift: estimated at £1.4 million after 10 years	£1.4 million in 10 years
2	Labour Supply Impacts: in the form of Productivity gains of over £10 million due to more productive jobs. This stems from the creation of 1,000 additional jobs over the 30-year appraisal period in the city (these are likely to be of a mix depending on the companies that take space but geared towards light manufacturing, potential for high-value industry)	1,000 Jobs in 30 years
3	Amenity Benefits: worth £7.4m as regeneration will follow placemaking principles to opening up the site to existing and new communities, allowing local consultation, as well as improving access to the river and enhancing the natural environment to create improved urban realm. The development will support 180 sustainable and affordable housing units within Forthside.	180 affordable housing units
4	Carbon and Energy Savings: as a result of connection to the Forthside District Heat Network that has capacity to distribute sufficient energy to save 255tonnes of CO2 per annum.	Save 255 tonnes of CO2 per annum
5	Enhancement in Natural Capital: potential to utilise areas of the site(s) and riverside for environmental enhancement, biodiversity gain, carbon capture and flood resilience.	
6	Social and Recreational Value: that reduces socio-economic inequalities and avoids impacts of blight (site becoming derelict for years to come) and associated economic loss compared to economic activity previously supported through MOD and the defence sector. This includes creation of new residential and business communities, providing a variety of public realm improvements and new active travel network.	
7	Crime Impacts: a reduction in crime associated with urban decay will avoid economic, fiscal and social costs to the public sector related to that crime.	

Cowie Regional Digital Hub – Benefits Realisation

Outcome	Strategic Objective Alignment	Cowie Digital Regional Hub Objectives (over 15 years)	Activities	Indicators
1	Shared Prosperity	To enable start-up, existing, and incoming businesses to have access to good quality, digitally enabled, flexible office space which is nearby their preferred location.	High-quality and digitally enabled business space is delivered through the Cowie hub.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustain an average of 20 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs through the Cowie hub. 10 of these Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs through the Cowie hub covered by Fair Work and Environmental pledges or commitments. Over 15 years, 80 start-up companies supported through the Cowie hub. Impact on performance of businesses based at the Cowie hub including measurable differences, intended and unintended outcomes.
2	Higher Value Jobs Inclusive Economic Growth	To provide supportive and collaborative business environments that enable sustainable business development and nourish economic growth.	Business support tailored to digital technology companies is developed and delivered through the Cowie hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 150 organisations enabling the development of digital technology within their businesses. No of businesses exporting products or services; broken down into markets. Support 15 entrepreneurs to develop innovative digital products and services. Impact on organisations receiving support including measurable differences, intended and unintended outcomes.
3	Inclusive Economic Growth Inclusive Skills Ecosystem	To ensure that inclusive growth is delivered by optimising contributions to skills and inclusion by all business support interventions.	Strong regional skills pathways will be developed to ensure that our most excluded communities can access a streamlined educational journey and inclusion support to realise their potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 800 people from the communities around Cowie to enable access to skills and training in digital technology related subjects including digital skills and data driven innovation. Provide skills and training opportunities targeting underrepresented groups in the city region supporting 400 women and 1,000 people with a disability. Provide 250 inspiring opportunities for employability, school, college and university students to engage with the digital technology industry on their journey to employment. Provide inspiring opportunities for employability, school, college and university students to engage with the digital technology industry on their journey to employment for 125 women and 50 people with a disability. Impact on performance of businesses based at the Cowie hub including measurable differences, intended and unintended outcomes.

Inclusion Workers & Investment Fund – Benefits Realisation

Outcomes	Strategic Objective Alignment	Detail	Target 24/25	Achieved 24/25
1	Shared Prosperity: Remove barriers to engagement and support inclusion to share prosperity and wellbeing across the region	Number of people receiving support from inclusion workers	70	90
2		Number reporting gains in soft outcomes	40	73
3		Number reporting barrier alleviated	20	48
4		Number participating in accredited learning	20	17*
5		Number progressing from Inclusion Worker Project to employability support	40	10*

*Note: These figures recognise that project participants have presented with significantly more multiple barriers to participation than expected and therefore their progression to accredited learning or employability support takes longer.



1

DRIVERS

- Strong digital economic base in Stirling
- Strong culture heritage and tourism offer
- World leading University in areas including environmental protection, technologies and change
- Home to the UK's leading centre for aquaculture research (University of Stirling)
- Areas of low job density
- Low quality, low value jobs
- Community exclusion (neighbourhood level)
- Groups across the region experiencing inequality



2

DEAL OUTPUTS

- Scotland's International Environment Centre
- The National Aquaculture Innovation and Research Hub
- Stirling Digital District & Regional Digital Hubs
- Culture Heritage and Tourism Programme
- Capital Fund for Clackmannanshire
- CRD Skills and Inclusion investment
- CRD Transport, Connectivity and Low Carbon investment
- CRD Infrastructure investment



3

ENABLERS

- Regional Economic Strategy*
- Regional Procurement Strategy*
- Regional Skills Strategy*



4

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Inclusive economic growth
- Higher value jobs
- Shared prosperity
- Inclusive skills ecosystem

Whilst there are many benefits the City Region Deal will provide, all programmes and projects are aligned and will be evaluated in accordance with our four key strategic outcomes, described in more detail using our SMART Strategic Objectives:

Strategic Outcomes	SMART Strategic Objective
Inclusive Economic Growth (IEG)	
Create conditions for businesses to thrive both locally and globally, increase job density and access to opportunity, maximising our regional assets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will create conditions for businesses to be more resilient and thrive both locally and globally 2. We will support the creation and retention of jobs promoting Fair Work 3. We will maximise our regional assets to increase the economic impact of visitors on our regional economy 4. We will support our regional supply chain through the use of progressive procurement
Higher value jobs (HVJ)	
Invest in the creation of clean, green innovations, digital entrepreneurship and cultural opportunities to deliver a more diverse regional economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will support an increase in the proportion of jobs within the region offering the Real Living Wage or higher 2. We will support an increase in entrepreneurship and business start-ups across the region 3. We will support an increase of the number of higher value jobs within the region as a proportion of all jobs
Shared prosperity (SP)	
Remove barriers to engagement and support inclusion to share prosperity and wellbeing across the region	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will support improving access to employment and Fair Work opportunities particularly for communities facing exclusion within the region 2. We will support improving access to employment and Fair Work for people within the region currently facing labour market exclusion due to specific circumstances or characteristics 3. We will reduce the region's dependence on fossil fuels and diversify our approach to its energy requirements 4. We will deliver our projects in accordance with the shared regional commitment to a Net Zero economy
Inclusive skills ecosystem (ISE)	
Widen access to opportunity through inclusive skills pathways that target those who face exclusion across our region	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will support the creation of a range of educational opportunities for employability, school, college and university students to engage with industry supporting their journey to employment 2. We will support improved access to skills, education and training opportunities for those who face exclusion or are at risk of exclusion from the labour market 3. We will provide opportunities for under-represented groups in key industries within the City Region Deal

The information collated at project level will then contribute to the Deal level analysis carried out under the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework on an annual basis. This will enable the partnership to evidence its performance and contribution to inclusive growth across the region and assess the impact of the total investment.

The outcomes of this will be reported through the Annual Report and discussed at the Annual Conversation, attended by the RPMO, representatives of all three partners and Scottish and UK Governments.



Progress To Date

Building on the significant progress outlined in the previous Annual Report, the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region programme continued with the positive working approach adopted by the partners to address significant external factors and challenges affecting the Deal throughout 2024 and 2025, none more so than the lasting economic conditions of increased inflation and the legacy of COVID-19. The partners, RPMO and both governments, remain committed to addressing these challenges. This year has seen continued advancement of the Deal's aims.

Progress to date has been both encouraging and impactful, as we continue to lay the foundations for long-term success across our portfolio of projects. We were proud to mark the opening of the active travel link between Alva to Menstrie in September 2024 as well as Walk Cycle Live Stirling project in April 2025. These are important milestones enabling and encouraging active travel and sustainable transport across the region. These achievements sit alongside our completed projects, including Cowie Digital Hub. Now fully operational, the Hub offers vital digital access and support to its communities. Our Japanese Gardens project, including the beautifully restored gardens, continue to enhance cultural and visitor engagement across the

Forth Valley, with more than 48,000 visitors last year. We also have successfully completed the transfer of land on the MOD site, unlocking prosperous development opportunities for this centrally located space. Additionally, our Energy Masterplan work has been completed, laying the groundwork for a more resilient and sustainable future in the energy sector.

These completions demonstrate our commitment to delivery and positive transformation of the region. The projects to date have already supported the creation of 82 new jobs across the region. Combined with the ongoing contribution to skills and training through Scotland's International Environment Centre, the impact and community value that the Deal is generating is clear. The jobs created span a range of sectors, from digital and innovation to tourism and infrastructure, helping to level up our local economy. These numbers will only rise further as projects in delivery progress, and further projects move into implementation phase.

Theme	Programme/Project	Stage
A. Transport, Connectivity & Low Carbon	Active Travel	Business cases being progressed
	Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling	Completed
	Energy Master Planning	Completed
B. Innovation	National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub	Implementation (Delivery)
	Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC) Phase 1	Implementation (Delivery)
	Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC) Phase 2	Under Review
	Intergenerational Living Innovation Hub	Under Review
	Innovation Project	Under Review
C. Skills and Inclusion	Flexible Skills	Implementation (Delivery)
	Inclusion Workers and Investment Fund	Implementation (Delivery)
	Clackmannanshire Lone Parent Programme	Business cases being progressed
D. Infrastructure	Ministry of Defence Land at Forthside	Completed
E. Culture, Heritage and Tourism	Developing Culture, Heritage and Tourism Assets	Business cases being progressed
	Japanese Gardens	Completed
F. Digital	Stirling Digital Hub	Implementation (Delivery)
	Regional Digital Hub – Cowie	Completed
	Regional Digital Hub – Callander	Business case being progressed
	Regional Digital Hub – Clackmannanshire	Under review

A Transport Connectivity and Low Carbon

1. Active Travel Programme

Lead Partners		Stirling Council			Clackmannanshire Council	
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners		Other Partners	Total funds	
£4,500,000	-	-		£10,719,000	£15,219,000	

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed programme review, first Business Justification Case submitted to Government for endorsement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of BJC at Joint Committee, Summer 2025

The strategic vision for the Active Travel Routes Programme is for Stirling and Clackmannanshire to be an exemplar for active travel culture as we collectively seek to address the global climate emergency. The Active Travel Routes Programme, and the schemes within, will be a key component of the active travel network in the Deal area. The Programme will deliver a step change in active travel culture, making travel by walking, cycling, and wheeling for people of all ages and abilities easier in Stirling, Clackmannanshire, and beyond.





The Active Travel programme is an investment in new dedicated walking, cycling, and wheeling infrastructure. Improving active travel options in Stirling, Clackmannanshire, and the wider region, specifically connecting communities and public transport destinations to further and higher education facilities, will encourage those travelling to those destinations to choose active travel rather than the car.

The Stirling and Clackmannanshire CRD also highlights the economic importance of investment in active travel, recognising its ability to improve regional connectivity between local authority areas and among rural communities, providing better access to employment and education as well as increasing tourism opportunities with connections to existing National Cycle Network.

Headline Achievements

This year, work has focused on reviewing the priority routes for the programme and developing the associated Business Justification Cases. The Business Justification Case for Dunblane to Causewayhead has been drafted and submitted to Government for review. The first phase of construction connecting Causewayhead with Bridge of Allan is programmed for 25/26.

For the Active Travel Scheme for Fishcross to Stirling University, with the first phase of this project from Alva to Menstrie being complete, we are moving into the development of our second phase of this project- the route between Fishcross to the University of Stirling, with our Business Justification Case in Development.

Looking to the year ahead, the second phase of this project – will see the Fishcross to University of Stirling phase commencing, with the Business Justification Case, being taken to Joint Committee for approval in Summer 2025. Detailed design, land acquisition and consultation processes are to be completed this year.

The design and route options for the second project, which is the route between Alloa and Stirling, are being progressed.

2. Walk Cycle Live Stirling

Lead Partner		Stirling Council		
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds
£2,539,000	-	£325,000	£8,720,000	£11,584,000

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project completed April 2025 	

Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling has created two new cycling, walking and wheeling corridors of more than 6.5 km that connect communities, businesses and higher education institutes across the city.

The £11 million project is a cornerstone of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal.

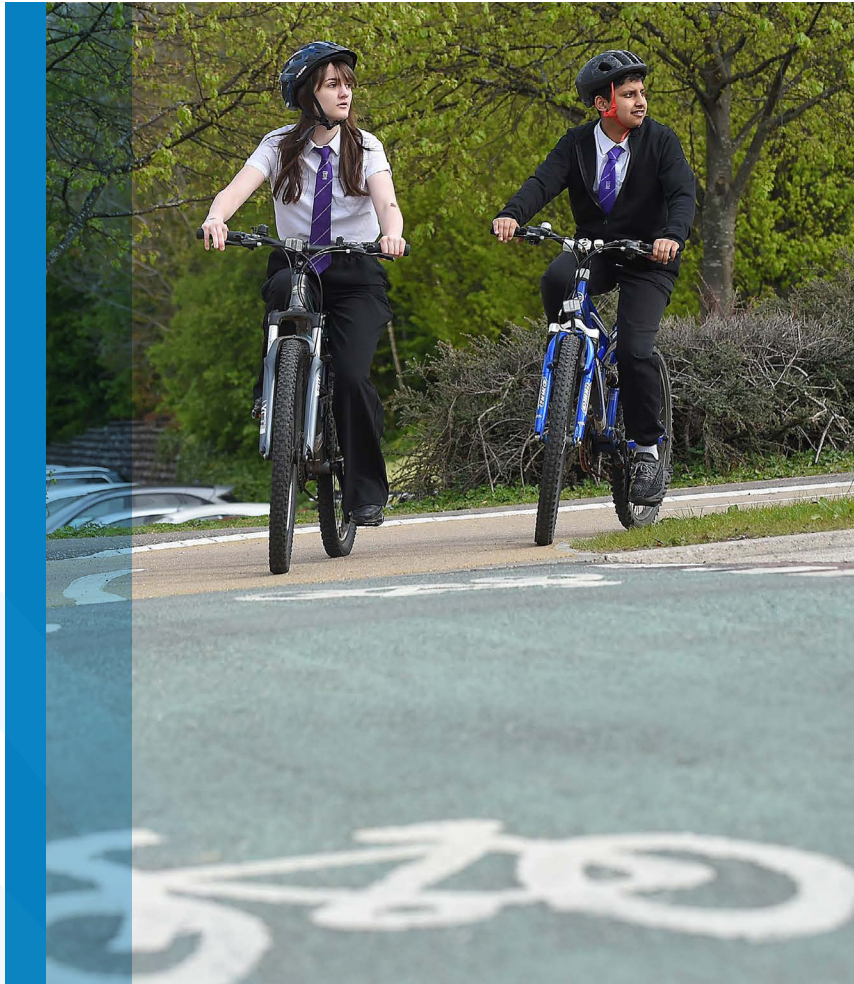
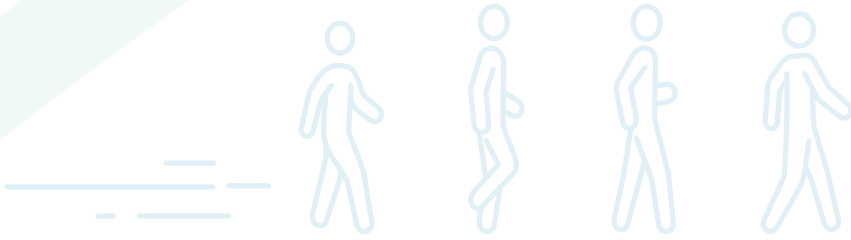
It has been funded by the Scottish Government through Sustrans' Places for Everyone programme (£8.4 million) and via the City Region Deal (£2.5 million), and by Stirling Council from developer contributions (£325,000).

Route one links Stirling Train Station and the University of Stirling, taking in iconic landmarks like Old Stirling Bridge and the National Wallace Monument along the way.

Route two has bridged the gaps between Forth Valley College and Stirling's historic city centre under the shadow of Stirling Castle.

The new infrastructure will also lay the foundations for future connections to Clackmannanshire and the wider Forth Valley region, and support the objectives of Stirling Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan.

The project was completed in April and officially opened on the 24th April at a key section of the route next to Wallace High School.



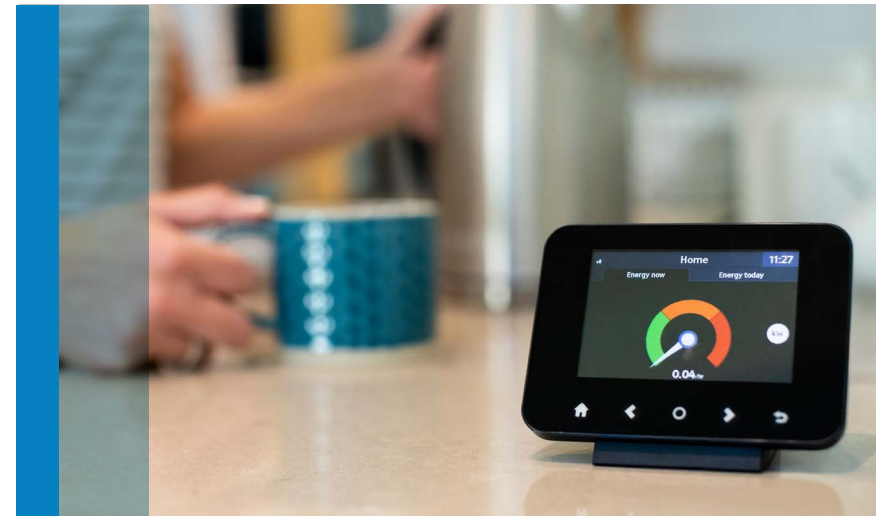
3. Regional Energy Masterplan

Lead Partner		Stirling Council		Clackmannanshire Council	
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners		Other Partners	Total funds
£200,000	-	-		-	£200,000

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project completed in 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Energy Masterplan is now complete - projects will be funded and progressed outwith the City Region Deal

The Regional Energy Masterplan (REM) for the Forth Valley area is central to the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region response to the global climate emergency. Energy consumption is the largest contributor of the region's carbon emissions: the development of this masterplan is therefore critical to our strategy for tackling this issue.

The City Regional Deal allocated £200,000 of funding to provide a Regional Energy Masterplan for the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Regions. The REM has produced a prioritised programme of future low- carbon energy projects.



It provides a strategic overview of the wider city region, assessing energy consumption needs and opportunities to assist in the ongoing transition to a low carbon region in the heart of Scotland, focusing on the key areas of:

- Energy Efficiency
- Heat Management
- Renewable Generation
- Sequestration

The projects, interventions and activities identified within the REM will be staged over a 22-year programme, in five-year phases.

Projects are prioritised based on agreed weightings, in line with local and national priorities and targets. Socio- economic assessments ensure investment in infrastructure that brings direct benefits to our communities, including fuel poverty reduction, carbon emissions reduction and regeneration of localities, as well as providing a more resilient and reliable energy supply.



B Innovation

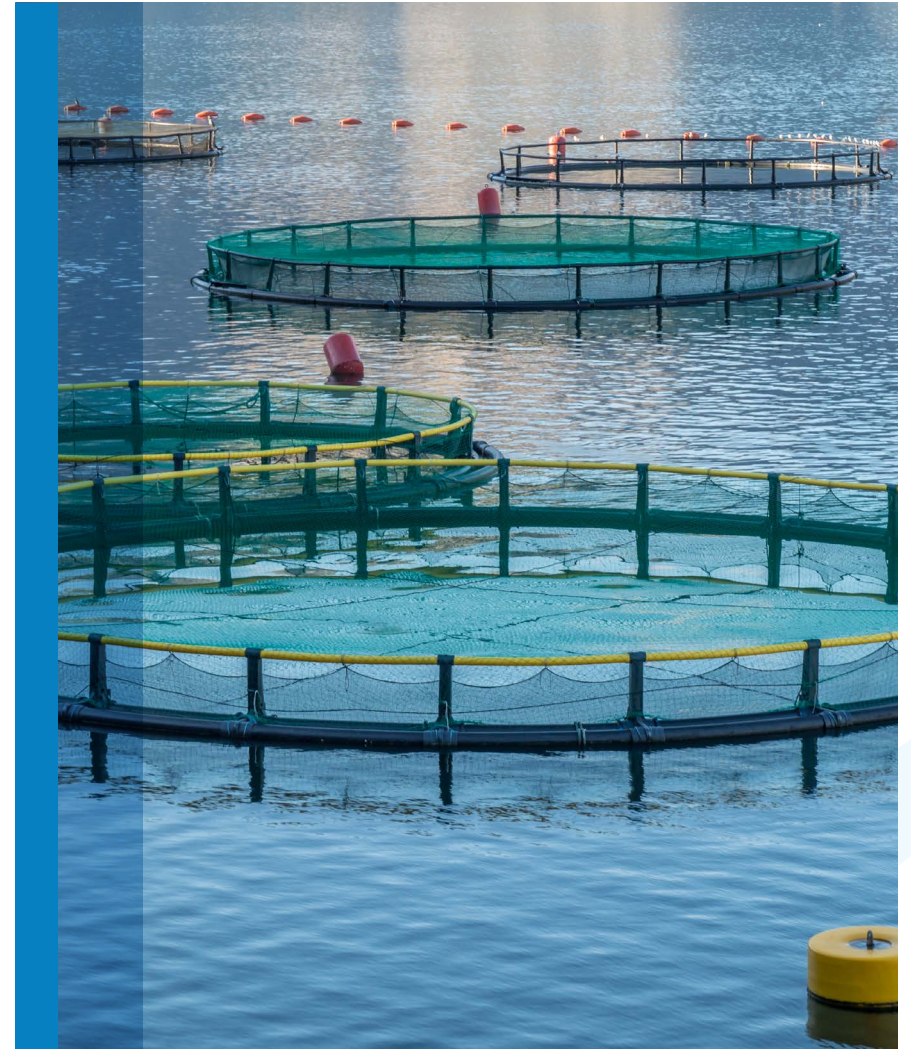
1. The National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub (NATIH)

Lead Partner		University of Stirling			
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Commerical Partners	Total funds
-	£17,000,000	£6,544,000	£1,000,000	£5,133,833	£29,677,833
Headline Achievements		Next Milestone			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility fully wind and watertight Specialist equipment partially installed Commissioning plan in place and approved 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical Completion – August 2025 Commissioning – August 2025 Facility fully operational – winter 2025 			

NATIH is a pioneering innovation centre set-up to drive the UK's ambitions to become a world leader in modern aquaculture practice. Part of the University of Stirling's internationally renowned Institute of Aquaculture, the facility is budgeted to cost £20.7m, funded by the UK Government (£17m), Wolfson Foundation (£1m), and the University of Stirling (£2.7m).

Construction of the new facility is well underway. A significant milestone was marked in November 2024 with a commemorative steel beam signing, when NATIH entered the final phase of construction. Installation of specialist equipment is now underway, ahead of practical completion and commissioning.

Efforts remain focused on the delivery of benefits and the successful commercialisation of these new assets, which will drive NATIH's pioneering work.





2. Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC) Phase 1

Lead Partner		University of Stirling			Clackmannanshire Council
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners		Other Partners	Total funds
£9,704,000	5,000,000	£1,000,000		£2,556,000	£18,260,000

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
Data Centre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Centre Landing Zone build completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete satellite data services deployment to Data Centre
Forth Environmental Resilience Array (Forth-Era): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commenced 3DEO Visualisation & Multi Dashboard Development Deployed 78.5% of sensor installations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete deployment of sensor installations. Operationalisation of Forth ERA
Business Accelerator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered training for carbon accounting and Net Zero carbon accounting for SMEs in the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits delivery plan Commercialisation of Forth ERA

Forth Environmental Resilience Array

The Forth Environmental Resilience Array (Forth ERA) is a first of its kind digital observatory of the Firth of Forth's entire water catchment. A living laboratory providing environmental data and analytics, Forth ERA will facilitate world-leading scientific research, promote more efficient environmental management and regulation, and stimulate business innovation in support of Scotland's transition to net zero.

Forth ERA is at the heart of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency's pioneering Satellite Emergency Mapping System (SEMS), launched in September 2024, that is revolutionising the way that Scotland responds to emergencies such as floods, wildfires, landslides, and oil spills. Forth ERA's pioneering infrastructure continues to expand, and its environmental data will be complemented by social data thanks to a £5m Local Policy and Innovation Partnership to explore how water resources in Scotland can promote better outcomes for our economy, society, and the environment.

Young Pathfinders

Young Pathfinders is an educational outreach programme, which empowers young people from Stirling and Clackmannanshire to respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by Scotland's transition to Net Zero.



The innovative, extra-curricular programme, which concluded in spring 2025, culminated with its largest cohort so far – bringing together 30 students from schools across Clackmannanshire and Stirling. The programme, along with the success of pupils involved, has been celebrated in the Scottish Parliament.

Business Accelerator

SIEC's Business Accelerator supports entrepreneurs at all stages of their journey, from start-ups developing green ventures to supporting existing business to meet Scotland's targets to achieve Net Zero by 2045. This is undertaken through a combination of training, knowledge transfer, businesses advice, and sustainability and carbon management planning.

The Accelerator also leads on the delivery of the SIEC benefits, and the commercialisation of SIEC's activity, building a supportive ecosystem that delivers a low carbon economy for the benefit of the entire region.

3. SIEC phase 2 & Intergenerational Living Innovation Hub

Lead Partner		University of Stirling		Clackmannanshire Council	
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners		Other Partners	Total funds
£7,296,000	£7,250,000	-		£17,954,000	£32,500,000
Headline Achievements				Next Milestone	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A refreshed proposition has been prepared which will allow the development of business cases once it has been agreed with partner organisations and other stakeholders.				<ul style="list-style-type: none">Agree the proposition.Options appraisal to be undertaken.Submission of a Formal Change Control Request.Submit Outline Business Case	

Alloa Innovation Campus

Progress has been achieved in advancing the concept of an Alloa Innovation Campus, which will bring together ILIH, the second phase of SIEC, Clackmannanshire's Digital Hub and Culture, Heritage & Tourism projects. Combined, the four projects focus on addressing two of society's biggest challenges: an ageing population and climate change. A proposal to deliver this element of the Deal has been prepared and is under internal review. The next steps will be to develop this further with our Deal partners.



The convergence of the climate crisis, demographic shifts, and technological advancements has created both unprecedented challenges and remarkable opportunities for the Forth Valley region.

Rather than viewing ageing populations and environmental sustainability as separate challenges, this approach recognises their profound interconnectedness and the opportunities that emerge from those intersections. The resulting 'Sustainable Living' concept offers a future where people across the lifespan can experience improved health and increased prosperity through the thoughtful utilisation of natural resources and materials to construct resilient communities.

This project seeks to address the many social challenges associated with growing older, including health inequalities, social isolation, and loss of identity while, at the same time, being respectful of our environment and communities. This will be accomplished by driving innovations through design, intergenerational integration, and opportunities in the circular economy.

Research and Policy Centre

As part of the initial proposal, a Research and Policy Centre was proposed to provide a home to bring together researchers, industry, policymakers, regulators, environmental interest groups, and communities. The scope of this proposal is currently under review.



C Skills & Inclusion Programme

1. Flexible Skills

Lead Partner				
Clackmannanshire Council				
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds
£1,503,000	-	-	-	£1,503,000
Headline Achievements		Next Milestone		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of the Flexible Skills Grant Fund in November 2024 Skills Pathway Plans completed March 2025 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project development activity across CRD projects and regional stakeholders 		

The Flexible Skills Project facilitates the inclusive growth ambitions of the City Region Deal partners' commitment to providing skills and employment opportunities across the significant CRD project investment in Stirling and Clackmannanshire. The City Region Deal will drive outcomes for local people through the ongoing and future investment activities of CRD projects, working in tandem with the employment and skills sector partners to realise these ambitions for local people.

The Flexible Skills Project works with CRD projects to develop skills and employment opportunities focussing on individual and groups facing barriers to the labour market. CRD projects

will be supported to identify these opportunities through the development of a series of Skills Pathway Plans that will identify the key occupations that will become available from their work-force planning activities and identify the individuals and groups that might benefit from developing skills in these occupational areas. The completed Skills Pathway Plans for CRD projects is targeted for March 2025.



The Flexible Skills Project established a Flexible Skills Grant Fund available to CRD projects in November 2024. The fund provides a platform for CRD projects to achieve their skills and employment ambitions through investment in a range of skills and employment activities, including:

- Employment recruitment incentives
- Modern Apprenticeship support
- Skills programme development and delivery
- Job placement programmes
- Business start-up programmes
- Volunteering development
- Removal of barriers to participation
- Digital inclusion

CRD projects are encouraged to develop a range of opportunities through their project investment and ongoing activities that will be available to eligible individuals and groups seeking a pathway to improved skills and employment opportunities. Projects will also be able to work in partnership with other sector stakeholders in the delivery of these inclusive growth outcomes.



With the establishment of the Flexible Skills Grant Fund in late 2024, continuing discussions are underway across CRD projects and other stakeholders on the development of skills and employment programmes that can support local people to take up the opportunities available through the significant City Region Deal investment in the region.

2. Inclusion Workers and Investment Fund

Lead Partner		Stirling Council			Clackmannanshire Council
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds	
£397,000	-	-	£313,000	£710,000	

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90 adults receiving support, exceeding our target of offering services to 70 adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver services to clients.

This year, our team of 'Inclusion Workers' continued to identify and support people most distant from the labour market, who are not yet ready to engage with mainstream employability provisions. The project is fully implemented with a team of four Inclusion Workers supporting people across Stirling and Clackmannanshire. 90 people have received support in 24/25, against a target of 70. The two case studies below, aim to demonstrate the impact this work can have.



Case study 1

Logan (19) who lives in the kinship care of his grandparents. Logan suffered from adverse childhood experiences including trauma loss and neglect. Logan has been diagnosed with ADHD and shows symptoms of him being on the autism spectrum. Logan spent all his time in his room playing video games. Logan had poor self-care skills and did not look after his living space.

When I met Logan we agreed to meet once a week in his back garden this would provide an opportunity for Logan to get out his room while developing a sense of routine. This also provided a safe space for Logan to talk through his emotional difficulties. I would use my communication and interpersonal skills to demonstrate to Logan I was interested in him and his development. Logan identified his goals as improved health and well-being and an increase in confidence and self-esteem. Logan also talked about his dream of becoming an actor.

Being compassionate and consistent with my support helped to develop a healthy working relationship as I got to know Logan better. We were able to have conversations around Logan's self-care and looking after his living space. Through

our regular meetings I would be a positive role model to Logan and encouraged him to take better care of himself and his living space. Logan took this on board and started showering more often and keeping his bedroom tidy. I would praise Logan for his efforts while encouraging him to keep moving forward. This helped Logan gain a sense of achievement and he felt better about himself and his health and well-being improved.

Logan was supported to complete a college application to study drama at Dunfermline College. Logan attended an interview at the college and recently he was given an unconditional offer. Logan has accepted this offer and his course starts in August. Moving forward Logan's goal is to get fitter as he prepares to start college and we have recently started going out for walks together.

When I asked Logan how he feels? Logan said "I feel proud of myself".

Logan's journey serves as a reminder of the importance of compassionate consistent support when working with young people who have experienced trauma, loss and neglect.

Case study 2

Joan (57) had experienced a lifetime of abuse, trauma and self-neglect. These experiences caused Joan to have depression with low self-esteem. Joan had been living with her daughter for around 3 years which was also having a negative impact on Joan's health and well-being.

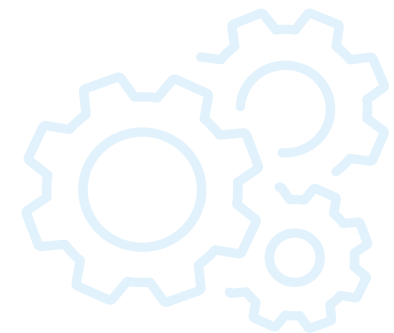
When I first met Joan we agreed to meet weekly and Joan identified her goals of improving her health and well-being while increasing her self-esteem and confidence. Joan also wanted to gain her own tenancy and one day get back into work.

Our weekly meeting involved walking to a local café and it was during this walk that Joan would talk about her unresolved issues. My approach was person centred and I supported Joan both emotionally and practically. I would empathise with Joan while summarising and paraphrasing to ensure Joan knew she was being heard. I would also encourage Joan by reminding her of what she has overcome, and I would instil hope for Joan by using motivational interviewing for Joan to identify what a better future would look like. I accessed a bike for Joan and this seemed to be a big help for Joan as it got her out the house more.

All this helped to build a healthy working relationship where Joan felt trusted and respected. Joan was also referred to a digital inclusion programme and she was a member of an art and social group, all contributing to Joan improving her well-being. I encouraged Joan to attend a 4-week bike maintenance course which again increased her confidence and self-esteem. I supported and advocated for Joan with her housing situation and she now lives in her own tenancy. Joan has also gained a part time job.

When I spoke to Joan recently, she relayed how much better her life is at the moment and how she is looking forward to the future. Joan added "if it wasn't for the inclusion project, I would probably be in my bed depressed".

Joan's journey highlights the importance of a person-centred approach to develop a healthy working relationship built on mutual trust and respect.





3. Clackmannanshire Lone Parent Programme

Lead Partner		Clackmannanshire Council		
Scottish Government	UK Government (DWP)	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds
-	£100,000	-	-	£100,000

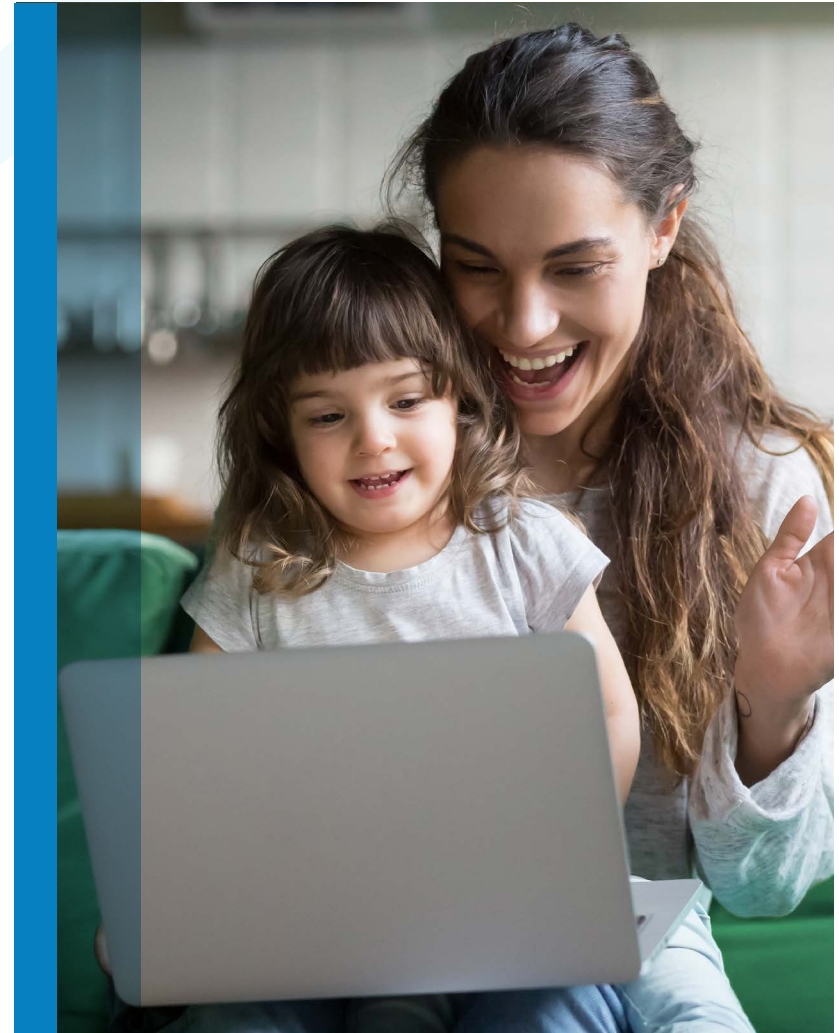
Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of project outline in October 2024 • Work underway on the development of the Business Justification Case ongoing from December 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft BJC for comment/approvals process. • Funding reprofile pending approved BJC, targeting a mid-2025 start date





The Clackmannanshire Lone Parent Project aims to build on the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan strengthening Clackmannanshire's inclusion activities. The project will provide employability support to lone parents in Alloa South and East and provide a pathway to the local labour market with the goal of improving income levels for this targeted group.

An outline proposal for the development of an employment placement and skills development programme for the targeted lone parent group was approved to progress to CRD Business Justification Case (BJC) in October 2024. Since approval, work has been undertaken on the development of the BJC through consultations with key sector stakeholders and target participants. The initial proposal is now being built upon to develop a more robust project methodology and a detailed understanding on project delivery components. It is anticipated that the Lone Parent Draft BJC will be completed in the first quarter of 2025/26 and will then move through the finalisation process, targeting a mid-2025 start date.



D Infrastructure

1. Ministry of Defence Land at Forthside

Lead Partner		Stirling Council		
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds
-	£5,000,000		£16,100,000	£21,100,000

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer of phase 1 land (March 2024) Transfer of phase 2 land (March 2025) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of Levelling Up Fund Project (March 2026)

The development of the Forthside Ministry of Defence site will unlock a significant mixed-use development opportunity, the scale of which has not yet been realised in Stirling for a generation. The site, at just over 36 acres, is the largest brown-field site close to the city centre area. This presents a unique opportunity for Stirling to deliver a sustainable development which combines carbon neutral city centre living with dynamic business and leisure space. The positioning of the site will provide a catalyst for wider placemaking opportunities and transform a key district of the city.

The site - strategically located between two of the main corridors into the city - has good access links. However, given recent use as a base by the Ministry of Defence, the value it adds to the city is currently extremely restricted. Proximity to Stirling's district heating system and Stirling rail and bus stations will make this one of Stirling's most sustainable developments.

This year, negotiations continued between Stirling Council, MOD Estates and the UK Government on the arrangements for the decommissioning and transfer of the land. The first phase of the land transfer was completed in March 2024, with the final land transferred in March 2025.

The Stirling Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid focused on the redevelopment of Forthside, building on the momentum gained through the City Region Deal. Stirling Council successfully secured £19 million of LUF funding, with £16 million allocated to the redevelopment of the MOD site. The remaining £3 million will enable active travel improvements to connect the site to the city centre and beyond. The redevelopment of Forthside will unlock significant economic development opportunities and create new employment for the region. The project will regenerate and transform the MOD site from a closed industrial site to a prime investment location.

This project has moved at pace this year with the Site Investigation and demolition completed on the phase 1 site. The first road is under construction and the buildings and site services have been designed to stage 4. The project is due to be completed by March 2026 in line with Levelling Up Fund timescales.



E Culture, Heritage & Tourism

1. Developing Culture, Heritage and Tourism Assets

Lead Partner		Stirling Council			Clackmannanshire Council	
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners		Other Partners	Total funds	
£15,000,000	-	£1,000,000		-	£16,000,000	

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project proposal received Joint Committee approval October 2024 to proceed to Business case development with prioritised projects. OBC development underway for Alloa Heritage and Enterprise Centre with £5.5m of CRD Culture Heritage & Tourism investment Business Justification Case development underway for the City Park and Interpretation/Wayfinding projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OBC submission for endorsement

This year, work has focused on progressing the projects to progress through this programme. The Joint Committee met on the 31st of October 2024 and agreed the funding split and projects to be progressed to Business Case. These are: City Park, Albert Halls, Bannockburn House, The Smith Art Gallery and Museum, the Wayfinding/Interpretation Trail project and Alloa Heritage and Enterprise Centre.

An initial project outline was developed for the Alloa Heritage and Enterprise Centre and submitted to the CHT Programme Board in June 2024. The proposal focuses on utilising the B listed historic Greenfield House in the centre of Alloa as both a unique

visitor destination experience and a sustainable platform for business and enterprise.

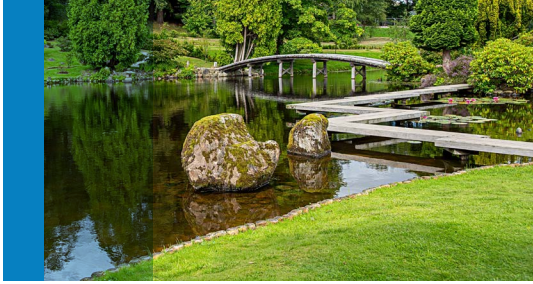
It is planned to utilise Clackmannanshire Council's Museum collection that is currently in storage, to showcase the stories of innovation throughout history and tie those to the presentation of current day innovations that will be developed going forward through Scotland's International Environment Centre and the Intergenerational Living Innovation Hub. The enterprise facility will underpin this making research and innovation more accessible to new businesses.

Joint Committee approved the project proposal in October 2024 to proceed to OBC development with £5.5m of CRD Culture Heritage & Tourism investment. Clackmannanshire Council have also committed £1m capital funding towards an initial repairs contract to make Greenfield House wind and watertight. A Contractor has been appointed April 2025 to conduct these works which will continue during 2025 & 2026. Further external funding is being sought to support the CHT project capital costs.

Project teams are in place for each project and these are being progressed through the Business Case process. Business Justification Cases for the City Park, Wayfinding and Bannockburn House projects are in development and due to be presented to Joint Committee in the summer.

The Albert Halls and Smith Art Gallery and Museum projects require funding to be leveraged into the project. Strategic Outline Cases and funding plans are being established to meet this requirement.





2. Japanese Gardens

Lead Partner		Clackmannanshire Council		
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds
-	£750,000	-	£1,148,000	£1,898,000

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restoration works complete March 2023 Education & Outreach programme extended LEADER funding award for New Education & Outreach building, completed July 2024 32 jobs created 49,000 visitors per annum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal to create new tearoom and shop pavilion to replace temporary portacabin accommodation, funding dependent. Working towards Planning application submission in 2025.

The Japanese Garden at Cowden was commissioned by the explorer Ella Christie in 1908 after an inspiring visit to Kyoto. The garden was created by Taki Handa, the only woman credited with the design of a garden of its type. The Japanese Garden was destroyed by vandals in 1963 and it was almost lost forever, until a careful restoration project by a charitable trust began in 2014. Due to overwhelming interest the garden opened to visitors while restoration work was in progress.

City Region Deal investment has been used to help develop the infrastructure and permanent facilities required for the

continued operation of this unique new tourism offering for Clackmannanshire. The project scope of works comprised the full restoration of the Japanese Garden, including permanent features such as the Tea House, gardens, pathways and enabling infrastructure. All works were completed by March 2023.

Forth Valley & Lomond LEADER funding was awarded to create a new Education and Outreach Building which was completed in July 2024. This provides a base for the Gardening Team, Volunteers and an education space from where workshops are delivered. The programme of education sessions includes



regular volunteering sessions, school group activities and working with specialist groups including

those who particularly benefit from the Garden experience and find it hard to access it by other means. Outreach also remains a key education activity building on the Wishes for Wellbeing project delivered in 23/24.

Also, in 2024 a UKSPF Communities + Place Grant provided for works to the car park, disabled parking, coach provision and a bike rack for cyclists.

Future capital projects are also now being planned, including a proposal to create a new tearoom and shop pavilion to replace the existing temporary portacabin accommodation. This is funding dependant. Working towards planning application to be submitted in 2025.

As part of the CRD monitoring and evaluation process, the Japanese Garden continues to report on the objectives stated within the business justification case and going forward the wider impact on the region will be assessed. The gardens are reporting a continuous rise in visitor numbers in excess of

40,000 per annum, with the majority travelling from outside the region. Employment and volunteering opportunities created so far have also exceeded target figures.



G Digital

Stirling Digital Hub

Lead Partner				
Stirling Council				
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds
£2,000,000	-	-	-	£2,000,000

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business case approved at March Joint committee 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commencement of works

The Digital District is intended to be a programme of investment and skills to transform and benefit urban, rural and disadvantaged areas of the region. The Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region aims to be recognised as one of the UK's leading areas for digital technology and as a centre of excellence for digital skills and education across several sectors.

The Stirling Digital Hub is a £2 million investment to deliver Phase 2 of the Digital District in Stirling, building upon recent successes and enabling future business growth. Work this year has focused on the development of the Business Justification Case which has been submitted to Government.

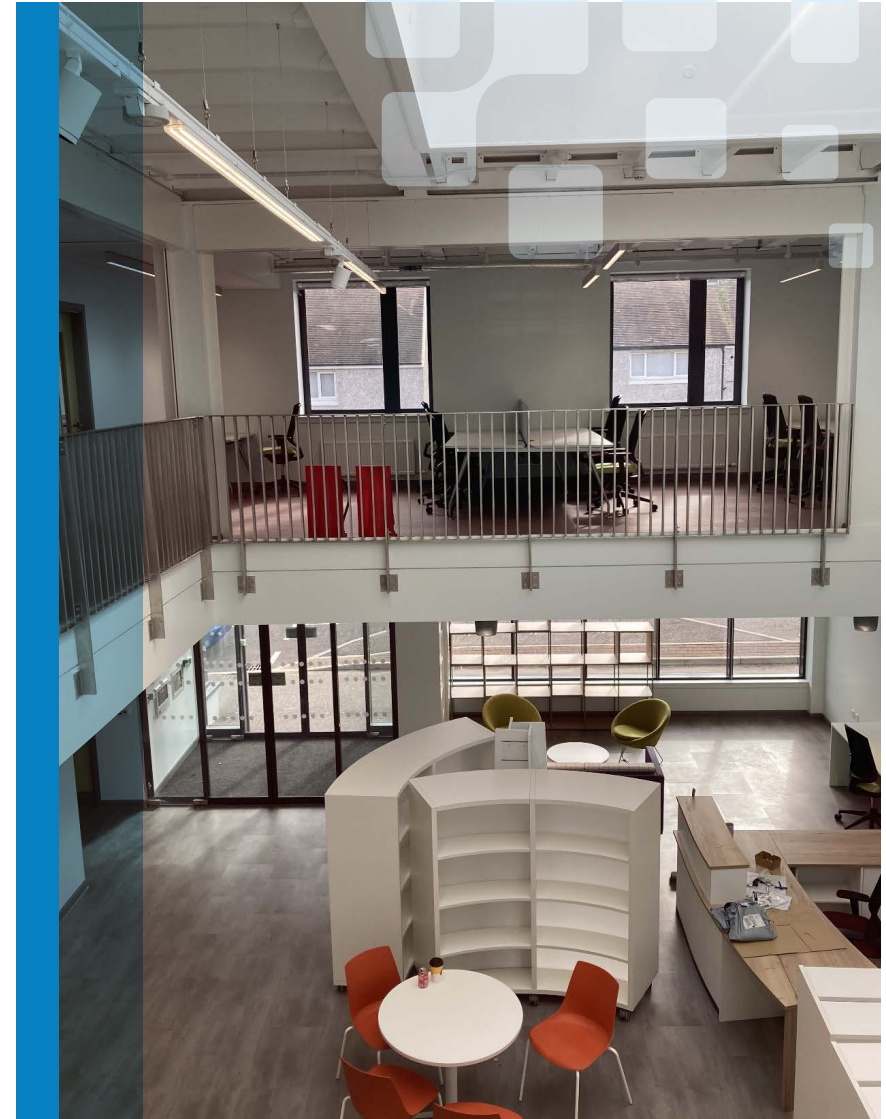
Through the optioneering process, a preferred way forward emerged as a building refurbishment at Forthside. The building will be refurbished to provide modern, flexible working spaces for digital business to grow and stay in Stirling.

The Business Case was approved by Joint Committee in March 2025. Works will commence at pace and are due to be completed by the end of 2025.

Digital Regional Hubs

The roll out of Digital Regional Hubs in our rural areas will also be supported by the City Region Deal. A trio of digital hubs will be located across the region in Cowie, Callander and Clackmannanshire. A total of £550,00 of CRD money was invested in the Cowie Digital Hub, while £790,000 is allocated to Callander and £660,000 to Clackmannanshire.

This will build on the city region's recent successes and enable future business growth. The investment will provide high quality business space which will allow growing companies in the region to stay local and create new and exciting opportunities across the area.



Cowie Digital Hub

Lead Partner		Stirling Council			
Scottish Government		UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds
£550,000		-	£241,000	£1,352,000	£2,143,000
Headline Achievements			Next Milestone		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Project Complete					

The Cowie Digital Hub provides modern business accommodation and a new library creating much needed space for community services, business and entrepreneurial activities as well as employability and skills support.

The library which hosts the Hub opened in the spring. Work then focused on completing the internal fit out and installing the required IT in the hub. A programme of activity has also been created and is led by the Stirling Enterprise Park (STEP) Rural Business Adviser, to support growing businesses in the area.



Callander Digital Hub

Lead Partner		Stirling Council			
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds	
£790,000	-	-	-	£790,000	

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of demand and feasibility work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Case to be submitted to Government for endorsement

Work this year has focused on reviewing the demand and feasibility of a Callander Digital Hub project. The business demand analysis work was concluded with results showing demand for the facility. Several options were therefore explored for the location of the Hub. This has resulted in a preferred way forward and architectural designs and costings are underway to inform the Business Justification Case. This is due to be submitted to Government early 25/26.



Clackmannanshire Digital Hub

Lead Partner		Clackmannanshire Council		
Scottish Government	UK Government	Regional Partners	Other Partners	Total funds
£660,000	-	-	-	£660,000

Headline Achievements	Next Milestone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial draft OBC prepared in 2023. Development of that proposal was paused as it was agreed in March 2024 to bring together this project within the Alloa Innovation Campus programme Spend profile for the Clackmannanshire Digital Hub was reprofiled to 2028/29. Work has recommenced early 2025 to outline the project working with key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BJC development to progress

The digital district is a programme of investment and skills to transform and benefit urban, rural and disadvantaged areas of the region. Within ten years, the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region aims to be recognised as one of the UK's leading areas for digital technology and as a centre of excellence for digital skills.

The £4M CRD investment in the Stirling Hubs, Cowie, Callander and Alloa regional hubs will provide high quality business space,

allowing growing companies in the region to stay local and create new and exciting opportunities across the area.

The Alloa Regional Digital Hub will be supported by a programme of skills development and training, involving businesses, schools, Forth Valley College, University of Stirling and local partners. The Alloa hub will help improve collaboration between digital projects in Alloa as it establishes itself as an international centre for environmental data.

9 Looking Back

The financial year 2024/2025 marks the mid-point of the Deal. A pivotal year in the transition into the final five years of our Deal. In April 2025 our Walk Cycle Live Stirling project completed, marking a significant milestone in our Deal and another one of our projects completed. This forms a key part of the ground-breaking and highly anticipated active travel network that will transform how people get around Stirling and the wider region.

The National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub has reached an important milestone in its construction, with the build progressing towards the fit out of specialised equipment that will enable the facility to deliver its distinct contribution to the global aquaculture industry. In parallel, there have been significant advancements in the work of Scotland's International Environment Centre, including sensor deployment for Forth ERA nearing completion. This year also saw the first phase of the transfer of the MOD land at Forthside, Stirling, decontamination of the site being a critical part of this.

March 2025 saw the approval of Stirling Digital Hub BJC. This is an essential step in progressing towards the beginning of works, with construction planned for Autumn 2025. Our Japanese Gardens, continue to deliver benefits for the Forth Valley community and has exceeded the number of visitors to the garden with 49,626 visitors this year, exceeding our annual visitor target figure of 25,000.



Looking ahead, and past the mid-way point of our Deal, we are looking to continue to strive to progress our Deal and implementing more of our projects and programmes in 2025-26. This year we will be focusing and looking forward to the completion of our NATIH Project, with practical completion and commissioning in August 2025, with the expectation for it to be fully operational by November 2025. This project has been in construction for some time and will be greatly anticipated by the wider research community.

Another key area of progression is the delivery of our Stirling Digital Hub. With the business case being approved in March at our Joint Committee, we are eagerly anticipating the works to start in 2025. Looking ahead to this year, our MOD Land second phase is scheduled to also complete in 2025. In our Active Travel programme, we anticipate seeing a number of routes to be progressed pending approval at our Joint Committee in the summer. This includes the route connecting Dunblane to Causewayhead as well as Fishcross to Stirling University in Autumn 2025. For our SIEC Project, we are eagerly awaiting the complete Deployment of sensor installations & Commercialisation of Forth ERA.

We look to spend the year focused on developing robust business cases for a number of our projects that are coming into delivery this year, as this is essential to driving forward the progress of our Deal portfolio. With multiple inter-connected projects and programmes in motion, maintaining momentum and aligning efforts across our teams and partners is the key to ensuring success. With this in mind, we are striving for a prosperous and productive 2025/2026, and with our communities and people at the heart of all we do, we will continue to monitor the impact our projects have on our communities as a whole.



Theme	Programme/Project	Next Milestone
Transport, Connectivity & Low Carbon	Active Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of Stirling project BJC at Joint Committee – Summer 2025 • Fishcross to University of Stirling Business Justification Case to Joint Committee Summer 2025. Detailed design, land acquisition and consultation processes to be completed.
	Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling	April 2025 (complete)
Innovation	National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioning autumn 2025 • Facility fully operational winter 2025.
	Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC) Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete satellite data services deployment to data centre for Forth ERA • Complete deployment of sensors for Forth ERA • Commercialisation of Forth ERA • Benefits delivery plan.
	Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC Phase 2) & Intergenerational Living Innovation hub (ILIH)"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree the proposition • Options appraisal to be undertaken • Submission of a Formal Change Control • Submit Outline Business Case.
	Innovation Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change Control to be submitted to Government Summer 2025.

Theme	Programme/Project	Next Milestone
Skills and Inclusion	Flexible Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project development activity across CRD projects and regional stakeholders • Flexible Skills Grant Fund take up over the period. • Completion and distribution of Skills Pathway Plans
	Inclusion Workers and Investment Fund	Benefits realisation
	Clackmannanshire Lone Parent Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone Parent Business Justification Case to Joint Committee June 2025 with project delivery to follow over 2025 and 2026.
Infrastructure	Ministry of Defence Land at Forthside	Completion of phase 2 land transfer
Culture, Heritage and Tourism	Developing Culture, Heritage and Tourism Assets	OBC development of Alloa Heritage & Enterprise Centre, working to Joint Committee approval March 2026.
	Japanese Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital work complete March 2023. Education & Outreach programme extended, LEADER funding award for New Education & Outreach building, completed July 2024. • Proposal to create new visitor pavilion to replace temporary portacabin accommodation, funding dependant. Planning application to be submitted in 2025.

Theme	Programme/Project	Next Milestone
Digital	Stirling Digital Hub	Business Justification case approved March 2025.
	Regional Digital Hub – Cowie	Project complete
	Regional Digital Hub – Callander	Submission of Business Justification Case to Government
	Regional Digital Hub – Clackmannanshire	BJC development working to Joint Committee approval March 2026.



Glossary

ATR	Active Travel Routes
BJC	Business Justification Case
CC	Clackmannanshire Council
CHT	Culture, Heritage and Tourism
COG	Chief Officers Group
CRD	City Region Deal
CWB	Community Wealth Building
COVID	Coronavirus
FBC	Full Business Case
OBC	Outline Business Case
ILIH	Intergenerational Living and Innovation Hub
NATIH	National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub
RDH	Regional Digital Hub
REAG	Regional Economic Advisory Group

REF	Regional Enterprise Forum
RES	Regional Economic Strategy
RPMO	Regional Programme Management Office
SC	Stirling Council
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SIEC	Scotland's International Environment Centre
SE	Scottish Enterprise
SG	Scottish Government
STAG	Scottish Transport Appraisal Guide
UKG	UK Government
UoS	University of Stirling

Regional Partners	3 Primary Deal Bodies
Other Partners	Other Public Sector and Third Sector Bodies
Commercial Partners	Private Sector Bodies



Stirling &
Clackmannanshire
City Region Deal

For further information:

Please contact the City Region Deal RPMO on
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Website: **StirClacksDeal.com**

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REPORT

Joint Committee 19 June 2025

Agenda Item 5.3

CRD Internal Audit Report – Schedule Update

Executive summary

Stirling Council to provide an update to the schedule of work for the CRD Internal Audit that is currently underway.

Brian Roberts, Interim Chief Executive, Stirling Council

Email address: robertsb@stirling.gov.uk

Neil Harman, Head of RPMO, City Region Deal

Email address: harmann@Stirling.gov.uk



Recommendations

Joint Committee is asked to acknowledge the updated anticipated CRD internal Audit schedule dates:

- Audit review and fieldwork: June – July 2025
- Preparation of draft audit report: August 2025
- Report to Joint Committee: Autumn 2025
- Report to CRD Partner Committees & Boards: Autumn 2025

Implications

n/a

Legal & Risk Implications and Mitigation

Conducting the audit meets our obligations set out in the Grant Offer Letter July 2024

Background

The Terms of Reference of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal (CRD) Joint Committee ('the Joint Committee') require the Committee to make suitable arrangements for the review and audit of its activities. As 'Accountable Body', Stirling Council's Internal Audit team will lead on Internal Audit work at a partnership level and report on that work, including the provision of appropriate assurance, to the Joint Committee. Sections 15.3 to 15.5 of the grant offer letter set out requirements in relation to Internal Audit Arrangements.

Considerations

Stirling Council will provide the necessary Internal Audit resource for this review.

Resource Implications

Financial Details



The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report.
This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes

Finance Officers have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications
as set out in the report. Yes

Staffing

The full implications on staffing are set out in the report. Yes

Exempt Reports

Is this report exempt? No

Equalities Impact

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

Legality

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

Sustainability and Environmental

It has been confirmed that sustainability and environmental issues have been
considered within the report. Yes

Policy Implications

n/a

Consultations

n/a

Background Papers

Have you used other documents to compile your report? No

Appendices



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

None

Approved by:

Brian Roberts, Interim Chief Executive, Stirling Council

12 June 2025

Email address: robertsb@stirling.gov.uk