FINANCE COMMITTEE

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

SUBMISSION FROM NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

1. I refer to your letter of 17 July 2012 regarding the oral evidence sessions on the need to improve the employability of individuals experiencing high levels of deprivation. The Council has been actively engaged in the development of an integrated and strategic approach to employability along with the Scottish Government and our Local Authority partners.

2. The Council is not only the lead strategic partner in the delivery of employability programmes but is also one of the largest local employers in North Ayrshire. Further as the major commissioner of both capital and revenue work in the area, the Council has a massive impact into providing employment opportunities for local residents. This response will focus on these key areas, i.e. what the Council is doing in terms of delivering employability services but also how the Council is using its position as the major local employer and deliverer and commissioner of services to improve the employment opportunities of individuals experiencing high levels of deprivation.

North Ayrshire Council as an Employer

3. The Council has traditionally offered a range of training opportunities and employment for young people, through Training for Work, Skillseekers and Apprenticeships. This has more recently been focused on Modern Apprenticeships (MAs), with the number of apprentices rising from the low twenties up to ninety full time Modern Apprentices. This makes the Council the single largest provider of Modern Apprentices in North Ayrshire. This expansion is largely due to the increased emphasis on job creation within the Council. Proposals are currently being developed for implementation over 2013/14 which will hopefully allow us to increase this to around 200, again showing the importance to the Council of providing training and employment opportunities for disadvantaged young people. In addition, in recognition of the importance we attach to the Modern Apprenticeships Scheme we expect to increase this again by working in partnership with other local employers.

4. The Council’s Modern Apprenticeship is delivered by our Human Resources department, who in turn fund the training element through Skills Development Scotland national programmes. The wage element of some of the new Modern Apprenticeships is partially funded by Economic Development through our Youth Employment Programmes. The model we have adopted is based on the Glasgow City Council Commonwealth Jobs Fund, as a recognised model of best practice. The clients who access the Modern Apprenticeship opportunities are recruited through our education department and from our integrated employability pipeline.
North Ayrshire Council as a corporate parent

5. The Council has identified the key role that employment plays in the future of our looked after young people. All schools have a specific resource to support our most vulnerable young people and our Secondary outreach teams work closely with the throughcare team in building employability skills. Additional resources from Economic Development have been channelled into the Throughcare team to provide dedicated Employability support for all our young people in Council care. This support will ensure that these young people will be directed towards the various Employability programmes currently on offer in North Ayrshire, including the Council’s MA programme. We are committed to prioritising these young people for any employment opportunities that North Ayrshire Council creates.

6. The Council’s Social Services also provides a variety of employment opportunities for their clients. This employment is heavily supported and would not be considered “open” employment, but it is vital to the development of clients who are absolutely furthest from the labour market.

7. Our Social Services are also working with Enable, a leading Social Enterprise, to create a new supported employment facility within North Ayrshire. This partnership development will provide up to twenty new supported jobs for a range of clients furthest from the labour market. The partnership project will use the Council’s Hazeldean horticulture centre in Kilwinning to create these opportunities as a standalone, self-sufficient social enterprise.

8. Critically, some Social Services service users will begin their journey a significant distance from the labour market and even further from employment. However, with access to a range of services needed to provide meaningful work experience, including the development of supported and intermediate opportunities in the social economy, the journey through the Employability Continuum gathers pace.

North Ayrshire Council as a procurer of services

9. Whilst the Council is aware of its vital role as an employer it is also important to bear in mind the services that are procured in the area using public monies. Over the last three years, the Council has embraced Community Benefit clauses with all capital projects over £1 million required by Council Standing Orders to include Targeted Recruitment & Training (TR&T) as part of the procurement assessment process.

10. This has been successful in a number of Council and local partner projects and has created over 100 training opportunities and around 20 new jobs. However, North Ayrshire Council is committed to embedding Community Benefit into all aspects of procurement. A number of actions have been taken to improve the delivery of Community Benefit and TR&T clauses;

- A new post has been created within our procurement team to ensure that all contracts, regardless of size or value will attempt to maximise the training and
employment benefits to North Ayrshire. This post will be key to embedding TR&Ts into all aspects of the Council's work. They will also monitor the success of these clauses to ensure full value for money is being achieved.

- The Council’s Social Services service has created a new post to maximise the benefits to local communities of the “personalisation“ agenda. This represents a massive opportunity to ensure that local services are delivered within our communities by local people. The job creation opportunities of this paradigm shift are considerable.

- Economic Development, Social Services and the Education Service are developing a strong relationship with Ready for Business under the Scottish Government’s Developing Markets for Third Sector Providers programme. Workshops have been delivered for managers and staff to further develop insight and expertise into the application of community benefit clauses and the Public Social Partnership model. Building knowledge in these areas is critical in order to maximise benefits in terms of social enterprise and local employment.

- A strategy has been agreed in collaboration with Economic Development to utilise the opportunities created across Social Services and by Personalisation for the development of social enterprises. Social Enterprises will play a key role in service delivery whilst generation local economic and employability impacts. The integration of public sector services, the shift in the nature and scale of demand and more proactive use of procurement will open up markets for social enterprises to create local employment. The aim is to develop a mixed economy of care provision with increasing involvement for social enterprises, a dynamic private sector and a more integrated public sector.

- Our Education service is in the early stages of procuring large capital projects, these will have clear community benefit clauses to ensure our young people are prepared for the opportunities that large construction projects offer. This matching approach will help those young people who have multiple disadvantages to access the training and opportunities offered.

- The Economic Development service is working with the Improvement Service in sharing our experiences of Community Benefit clauses, learning from other Local Authorities, introducing best practice and engaging with other public sector organisations.

11. Economic Development and Services are currently working in partnership with NHS Ayrshire and Arran to ensure that the maximum benefits are secured from the development of the new North Ayrshire Community Hospital. It is recognised that major infrastructure projects will generate economic benefits from the construction phase through to the direct and indirect employment opportunities that will be created. Strategies for community benefits clauses and social enterprises are already being developed. This will be informed and supported by extensive stakeholder and community consultation that will raise awareness and identify potential areas of support to ensure that benefits are maximised.
North Ayrshire council as lead employability provider

12. Accessing better employment and training opportunities is a priority of North Ayrshire’s Single Outcome Agreement ‘North Ayrshire “A Better Life’’. As lead partner, North Ayrshire Council has developed a strategic skills pipeline which was developed to reduce duplication of services and better target resources to improve customer focus and provide clarity of service around the needs of clients and employers. A copy of the pipeline is attached (Appendix 1) which summarises services provided.

13. The strategic skills pipeline is a two year programme which became operational in April 2011 and ends in March 2013. Appendix 2 details the targets set for the pipeline and performance in 2011/2012 against these targets. Appendix 2 also summarises performance overall of the Council’s employability offer.

14. In addition to this, the Council is committed to working with all local and national partners to address youth unemployment. The Council has firmed up this commitment by allocating £1.2m to initiatives to tackle youth unemployment and a youth employment strategy has been drafted to co-ordinate activity which stresses the need to create employment demand within local businesses. Performance since the first Youth employment programme was launched in November 2011 shows that 102 16-19 year olds have secured employment. A new programme to incentivise employers to take on apprentices/graduates was launched in July 2012 and already 25 applications have been received from local employers. A new service is also currently being procured to encourage youngsters to start their own businesses.

15. This pipeline of employability support is further enhanced by the national ‘Opportunities for All’ strategy. North Ayrshire Council has been actively delivering this strategy and together with partners we are committed to ensuring that the transition from school to post-school is a positive one for all our young people.

16. The Council believes that this represents a comprehensive offer to local people who require support to improve their employability skills to make the transition to sustainable and fulfilling employment. It also demonstrates the importance North Ayrshire Council attaches to this issue and how it is responding to it.

Conclusion

17. North Ayrshire Council welcomes this opportunity to promote the work we are doing to help disadvantaged residents into employment. Our commitment in this area is enshrined in our recently launched Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy (summary attached). A key principle of this document is that, “The public sector will be responsive to the needs of business and individuals and will achieve this by working more effectively individually, collectively and, where appropriate, in partnership”.

18. We are conscious of the vital role local authorities play within their local economy and are committed to ensure that North Ayrshire Council fully engages in
providing opportunities for those who suffer disadvantage within the labour market. We welcome the opportunity offered in this consultation to learn from other local authorities and where appropriate share our experiences with others.
## Appendix 1: North Ayrshire Strategic Skills Pipeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pipeline</th>
<th>Stage 1 Referral/Engagement activity</th>
<th>Stage 2 Barrier removal</th>
<th>Stage 3 Vocational activity</th>
<th>Stage 4 Employer Support, Engagement &amp; Job Matching</th>
<th>Stage 5 In-Work/Aftercare &amp; Skills Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAC CPP proposal</td>
<td>Engagement activities to link with participants with multiple barriers, those furthest away from the labour market. Will work closely with Health &amp; Social work colleagues. Particular focus of the MCMC group and linkages to Education and SDS. Soft outputs for this sort of activity looking at progression through the pipeline.</td>
<td>Jobs Access programme – flexible service to tailor softer support to individuals moving closer to the labour market. Support into Employment – specifically removing barriers to employment, such as childcare, skills, motivation, etc. as a tailored support package.</td>
<td>Jobs access programme acts as a clearing house for all vocational training requirements – links to SDS, FE provision, private training providers and also delivers in-house training for CSCS, SAGE, Office applications, etc. Training programme for client link to both local vacancies and participant aspirations. Will respond to specific requirements of employers.</td>
<td>Transitional Employment programme – part time work placements with local employers – next generation ILM that benefits local employers and participants. Link to job brokerage/Employer Engagement ERDF activity.</td>
<td>Skills for growth – a NAC programme nested within a linked ERDF programme of business support. This programme will tailor support for in-work employees of SMEs to develop the productivity of the organisation. This is an extension of a currently funded Priority 2 bid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteering programme – uses the benefits gained through volunteering to move clients closer to the labour market. Lockahead – supports those on incapacity benefit to move towards employment. Particular emphasis on mental health issues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community Benefit Support programme – support package tied into public sector capital works Community Benefit clauses that maximise construction opportunities for MCMC group. Ties in with Modern Apprenticeship schemes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Appendix 2 – employability outputs April 11 – March 12

The North Ayrshire Employability Programme is funded by North Ayrshire Council and European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The programme is funded until March 2013. The programme consists of the following services: Integrated Employability Service – Celsayshire; Lookahead – the Wise group; Volunteering Opportunities Programme – The Ayrshire Community Trust; Vineburgh Regeneration programme – Cunninghame housing association; MCMC programme – Education services, Skills Development Scotland.

Table 1: North Ayrshire Strategic Skills Pipeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreed outputs</th>
<th>Targets April 2011-March 2013</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 No. of participants receiving support</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>2582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 No of participants with multiple deprivations</td>
<td>3600</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 No of participants in NEET group</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 No of participants entering employment</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>1004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 No of participants entering Ed or training</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 No of participants gaining a full qualification</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 No of participants gaining a partial qualification</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Number of participants at risk of becoming NEET on leaving school</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Numbers in employment 6 months after leaving</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>453*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*There is a 6 month lag in measuring this figure and is constantly updated

The wage subsidy programme is not part of the wider European funded employability programme and is reported separately.

Table 2: Wage Subsidy (Jobs Access): April 2011 – March 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beneficiaries recruited</th>
<th>Beneficiaries into work (6 months subsidised Placement)</th>
<th>Companies receiving support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Youth employment support initiative – programme started October 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beneficiaries onto Strive programme</th>
<th>Completing Strive</th>
<th>Beneficiaries into work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2 – employability outputs April 11 – March 12

Table 4: Summary of employability activity April 2011 – March 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beneficiaries Registered</th>
<th>Beneficiaries into work</th>
<th>No.s in MCMC Group</th>
<th>Beneficiaries into education/training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>792</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2785</strong></td>
<td><strong>1169</strong></td>
<td><strong>388</strong></td>
<td><strong>703</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

The programme is making a significant contribution to jobs and training locally and is working with local businesses to ensure the services are suitable to their needs. It also contributes to the SOA’s ‘work and training’ outcomes and the North Ayrshire Economic Development and Regeneration strategy.
edr
economic development & regeneration
Summary Strategy for North Ayrshire 2010 - 2020
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
Vibrant
Diverse
Connected
Ambitious
Visible

economic development & regeneration
North Ayrshire
Economic Development & Regeneration Strategy

This strategy spells out ambitious and far-reaching goals to transform North Ayrshire.

Ambitious? - yes, because it sets out visionary targets.

Far-reaching? - yes, because we recognise we cannot achieve everything overnight.

We will expand and increase our business base, improve our skill levels and redevelop our town centres. In short, we will make North Ayrshire a fine place to live in and work in.

The foundations are there. We are compact, our coastline is a priceless asset and our transport links to the rest of Scotland and beyond are good.

Now we will build on them to achieve a better North Ayrshire.

Elma Murray
Chief Executive, North Ayrshire Council

Professor Alan McGregor
Chair, North Ayrshire Economic Development & Regeneration Board
North Ayrshire Council and the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership place the utmost importance on the need for economic development and regeneration and have worked hard to tackle North Ayrshire’s economic difficulties.
North Ayrshire has for many years experienced profound economic difficulties in relation to high unemployment, low pay, multiple deprivation, low levels of business start-up and business stock, poor quality urban fabric and lower than average house prices. The economic recession further exacerbates these difficulties.

North Ayrshire Council and the North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership place the utmost importance on the need for economic development and regeneration and have worked hard to tackle North Ayrshire’s economic difficulties. However, to guide future activities, an Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy for North Ayrshire for 2010-2020 is required.

This will provide North Ayrshire Council and its partners with:

- A clear vision for North Ayrshire’s future
- A framework for a more joined-up approach to economic development and regeneration
- A process for effective implementation of the Strategic Action Plan
Our Challenges and Opportunities: Economy and Public Sector Spending Cuts

"The wider economic climate will have a significant impact on North Ayrshire given that North Ayrshire already has high levels of unemployment and youth unemployment."
Our Strategy is being launched at a time of great uncertainty for the economy as a whole and particularly for the public sector, given the significant cuts required to tackle the budgetary deficit. The main challenges are clear, however.

The UK and Scotland are now out of recession, but economic output remains well below pre-recession trends and growth is likely to be weak over the medium term.

Previous recessions show that unemployment lags economic recovery, and so unemployment could continue to rise in the short to medium term – particularly with major cuts in public sector employment.

Public sector expenditure is expected to fall by 15% between 2009/10 and 2015/16. In Scotland, this is expected to equate to an average annual decline in Scottish Government spending of 3%.

Capital investment (which includes local government, transport and housing and regeneration) is likely to be particularly badly hit.

The wider economic climate will have a significant impact on North Ayrshire, given that North Ayrshire already has:

- high levels of unemployment and youth unemployment
- a vulnerable industrial structure characterised by a high proportion of its jobs in the public sector and in intermediate level manufacturing
- the challenge of attracting investment into the regeneration of Irvine Bay.
Our Challenges & Opportunities: Scottish and UK Policy

The policy environment is also in a period of flux following the election of a new UK Government in May 2010 and the outcome of the May 2011 Scottish Parliamentary elections. For North Ayrshire, the main challenges and opportunities are:

- To contribute more strongly to the Scottish Government’s Economic Strategy and National Outcomes.

- To respond quickly to changes in UK welfare policy and programmes so that North Ayrshire’s out-of-work benefits claimants are supported as effectively as possible towards and into jobs in North Ayrshire and elsewhere.

- To support the opportunities for North Ayrshire stemming from the National Planning Framework for Scotland 2 and the National Renewables Infrastructure Plan – notably from Hunterston.
Our Challenges and Opportunities: North Ayrshire’s Economy and Labour Market.

North Ayrshire’s economy and labour market has been deteriorating relative to other areas over the last five years. Our Strategy will therefore first need to reverse these trends before creating a more vibrant and diverse economy and labour market over the next 10 years.

The main challenges are:

- **Increasing North Ayrshire’s business base**
  For North Ayrshire to have the same jobs and business density as the rest of Scotland, a massive 22,500 more jobs and 850 more businesses would require to be created in the area. North Ayrshire is well-represented in manufacturing, tourism and public sector services, but seriously under-represented in business, financial and IT services.

- **Tackling North Ayrshire’s high worklessness rates**
  North Ayrshire performs below the Scotland and West of Scotland averages on all unemployment measures, with the gap widening on most indicators.

- **Improving North Ayrshire’s skills levels**
  Using qualifications as a proxy for skills, North Ayrshire performs below the Scotland and West of Scotland averages on adult and school age qualifications with the gap again widening.

- **Reducing North Ayrshire’s deprived areas**
  The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that deprivation levels in North Ayrshire have increased with 24% of the area’s datazones now in Scotland’s worst 15%.

- **Improving North Ayrshire’s infrastructure and tourism**
  The poor state of many of North Ayrshire’s town centres; the surplus of former industrial land; the poor quality of available business premises and gaps in the North Ayrshire tourism offer.
Our Challenges and Opportunities: Stakeholder Perspectives

Our Strategy is informed by the views of a wide range of stakeholders – including local employers and local communities. While all recognised the challenges facing North Ayrshire’s Economy and Labour Market, as detailed on previous page, they also recognised the opportunities and assets on which to build.

The opportunities and assets identified include North Ayrshire’s quality of environment and scenery; tourism assets such as Arran, Largs, Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, golf courses and marinas; good road and rail transport infrastructure with access to air and sea ports; the presence of some major global and innovative businesses; the development opportunities around Hunterston, Ardrear’s energetics cluster and Glengarnock/Lochshore; and an available pool of labour.

The uncertain economic climate makes addressing North Ayrshire’s challenges and building on its opportunities and assets more demanding. In addition to the uncertain environment, stakeholders also identified weaknesses in past economic development and regeneration activities that our Strategy will seek to overcome. These weaknesses include:

- No clear strategy or vision for North Ayrshire – amidst a wider lack of ambition for the area.
- Lack of clarity around who is driving forward economic development and regeneration in North Ayrshire.
- Lack of leadership around key sectors and opportunities – e.g. tourism and renewables.
- Limited evidence on how effective North Ayrshire’s economic development and regeneration activities have been to date.
Our Strategy

"Combined, these characteristics will revitalise North Ayrshire’s economy and communities, making them more resilient.

edr
economic development & regeneration
Our vision that guides the North Ayrshire Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy is that by 2020 North Ayrshire will be:

**Vibrant**
More businesses and jobs located in the area, and revitalised town centres.

**Diverse**
There will be a diverse range of businesses and industries in North Ayrshire, attracting a wide range of people to live and work in the area.

**Connected**
North Ayrshire will be well-connected to ensure individuals and businesses can take advantage of opportunities outside the area. North Ayrshire will have a clear role in the wider Glasgow City Region.

**Ambitious**
Individuals and businesses will be ambitious, making the most of what North Ayrshire has to offer and taking advantage of the connections to elsewhere. The public sector will be ambitious for North Ayrshire as a whole and ensure the supports are in place to help individuals and businesses to realise their ambitions.

**Visible**
Individuals, businesses, policymakers and funders will have a clear sense of what North Ayrshire can offer them.

Combined, these characteristics will revitalise North Ayrshire’s economy and communities, making them more resilient.
To achieve our vision, we have set two bold strategic goals for our Strategy.

North Ayrshire becomes a leading location for doing business, with a jobs density in the top half of all Scotland’s local authorities. A longer term aspiration is to be in the top quartile of Scotland’s non-city local authorities.

Worklessness is at the Scottish level and there is less inequality within North Ayrshire, with no datazone having an unemployment level of more than double the rate for North Ayrshire as a whole. This will help halve the number of deprived areas in Scotland’s worst 15%.

The Strategy contains details of milestones that have been set for 2011 and 2014.
We have also set a strategic principle that is key in delivering the vision.

The public sector will be responsive to the needs of businesses and individuals and will achieve this by working more effectively individually, collectively and, where appropriate, in partnership. To facilitate this, partners will be asked to sign up to the Strategy, outlining the commitments they will make towards delivering the vision, goals, objectives and projects.

We have eight strategic objectives which will help to focus our efforts:

To increase the number of jobs through a co-ordinated approach that encourages start-up, supports existing business to grow and attracts businesses to North Ayrshire.

To encourage the current business base to move up the value chain and to attract high value-added activities and jobs to North Ayrshire.

To provide an accessible and seamless pathway of services to help workless residents, including young people, into sustainable employment.

To stimulate demand for skills and training amongst employers and residents.

To transform deprived areas in North Ayrshire into strong, resilient and sustainable places by developing a customised approach for each area.

To support the creation of distinctive, vibrant town centres and establish mechanisms to encourage spend in North Ayrshire.

To improve North Ayrshire’s connections to neighbouring areas, the West of Scotland, Scotland, the UK and Internationally. This encompasses both physical connections (e.g. transport, ICT) and institutional and business links.

To develop clear statements of North Ayrshire’s offer and to ensure the area is promoted effectively to individuals, businesses and Government.

Ambitious
Implementing Our Strategy

Our Strategy must be turned into action and begin to change the way economic development and regeneration activities are planned, commissioned and delivered. Critical to this is the development of strategic projects that have the capacity to make a significant impact on North Ayrshire, but are also targeted at specific opportunities or weaknesses.

We have identified 10 strategic projects:

Develop a Business Development Continuum for businesses to access the services they need whether delivered by a local, pan-Ayrshire, regional or national organisation. A key element of this is a Bayniec North Ayrshire programme to encourage local businesses to widen their markets.

Attract and retain high value businesses through developing modern business facilities and a skilled and adaptable workforce that builds on employment and skills pathways into key industries, promotes the benefits of training, and encourages employers to partner with schools.

Improve the tourism offer by addressing identified gaps and developing a cross-marketing campaign as used successfully in Arran.

Build on North Ayrshire's major assets, including Hamilton and the energielsniest, to help create skilled jobs.

Update the current Employability Strategy with the aim of developing an Integrated Employability Pathway.

Develop customised approaches for North Ayrshire's deprived areas — including the development of a small number of Total Place pilots. Total Place is about closer collaboration and alignment of services within a defined area, combined with innovative working on the frontline. The aim is to deliver better services at less cost and critical to this is identifying and avoiding any overlap and duplication of services.

Achieve town centre regeneration by ensuring an appropriate mix of retail, leisure and commercial facilities and services in each town centre.

Encourage local businesses and the public sector to spend more locally through developing business-to-business networking opportunities, public sector community benefit clauses and supply development programmes.

Continually improve North Ayrshire's connections to other areas by working with partners to overcome infrastructure problems faced by local businesses.

Develop clear statements of North Ayrshire's offer that are customised to the target audience — with regular major events or developments also delivered to help raise North Ayrshire's profile.
It is essential that our Strategy has the mechanisms in place to drive forward the Strategy.

Our immediate priority is to establish a Strategic Group (or Board) that is responsible for ensuring the Strategy’s vision, goals, objectives and projects are delivered.

Its remit includes:

- signing off the Strategy
- commissioning and signing off a three-year Business Plan and one-year Implementation Plan
- making key decisions around service design, delivery and resource allocation
- reviewing progress towards milestones and targets on an annual basis.

It should have a small, but senior level membership that consists of North Ayrshire Council, Irvine Bay Regeneration Company, Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Jobcentre Plus and Visit Scotland. Private sector representation may also be advantageous.

North Ayrshire Council should lead the Strategic Group.

The Strategic Group needs to be served by a dedicated and resourced secretariat.

At an operational level, it is essential that there is a dedicated Implementation Group in place. Its remit is to be collectively responsible for:

- The delivery of specific strategic projects.
- Reporting progress against strategic projects, milestones and targets.
- Raising any emerging issues, challenges and opportunities.

A robust process for reviewing progress against targets and milestones on an annual basis must be in place. The review process needs to sit at the heart of a drive to become much more demanding about what local services, projects and interventions deliver in terms of the economic development and regeneration strategic projects and goals set out in the Strategy. Particularly in a period of reduced resources, tough decisions will need to be made where delivery is ineffective. The first Annual Review should be held in September 2011. It should then be repeated annually in September to guide spending decisions for the subsequent financial years. The Strategic Group should be responsible for leading the review process.
## Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SO1</th>
<th>SO2</th>
<th>SO3</th>
<th>SO4</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To increase the number of jobs through a co-ordinated approach that encourages start-up, supports existing businesses to grow and attracts businesses to North Ayrshire</strong></td>
<td><strong>To develop a new business cluster that would create up to 1,000 new jobs and ensure that it remains a high growth area</strong></td>
<td><strong>To provide an accessible and seamless pathway of services to help workforce retention, including young people, into sustainable employment</strong></td>
<td><strong>To eliminate the situation of losing too many people and retaining</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Headline Evidence</strong>&lt;br&gt;Low job density&lt;br&gt;Low business density&lt;br&gt;Low start-up rate</td>
<td><strong>Headline Evidence</strong>&lt;br&gt;Concentration of low-value economic activities (especially manufacturing)&lt;br&gt;At risk of competition</td>
<td><strong>Headline Evidence</strong>&lt;br&gt;High levels of worklessness&lt;br&gt;High levels of youth unemployment&lt;br&gt;Gaps persist over time</td>
<td><strong>Headline Evidence</strong>&lt;br&gt;Skill profile poor&lt;br&gt;Worsening compared to other areas</td>
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<td><strong>Our Tasks</strong>&lt;br&gt;Enhanced business development support&lt;br&gt;Customised marketing of North Ayrshire offer&lt;br&gt;Facilitate developments at Hunterston and energy parks&lt;br&gt;Improve tourism offer</td>
<td><strong>Our Tasks</strong>&lt;br&gt;Enhanced business development support&lt;br&gt;Customised marketing of North Ayrshire offer&lt;br&gt;Develop modern business facilities&lt;br&gt;Improve employment and skills pathways</td>
<td><strong>Our Tasks</strong>&lt;br&gt;Enhance employability offer&lt;br&gt;Improve linkages to jobs outside North Ayrshire&lt;br&gt;Improve employment and skills pathways&lt;br&gt;Redundancy matching service&lt;br&gt;Integrated transition team for young people</td>
<td><strong>Our Tasks</strong>&lt;br&gt;Promote benefits of training&lt;br&gt;Mechanisms in place to ensure demand can be met&lt;br&gt;Redundancy matching service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What we Will Achieve</strong>&lt;br&gt;More businesses&lt;br&gt;More start-ups&lt;br&gt;More jobs</td>
<td><strong>What we Will Achieve</strong>&lt;br&gt;Industrial profile remains diverse&lt;br&gt;More high value-added activities – including SG/SSE priority industries</td>
<td><strong>What we Will Achieve</strong>&lt;br&gt;Improvement in unemployment rates&lt;br&gt;Improvement in employment rates&lt;br&gt;Reduction in the number of redundant employees&lt;br&gt;Reduction in the number of redundant employees</td>
<td><strong>What we Will Achieve</strong>&lt;br&gt;Fewer residents with no qualifications&lt;br&gt;More residents with Level 3/4 qualifications&lt;br&gt;Higher qualifications levels for 16-24s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Pursuing our strategic objectives

**SO5**
- **Headline Evidence**: Enriched and deepening deprivation
- **Our Tasks**: Customised approaches including "Total Place" plans
- **What we will achieve**: Better access to amenities

**SO6**
- **Headline Evidence**: Large proportion of North Ayrshire income is spent outside area
- **Our Tasks**: Town centre regeneration
- **What we will achieve**: More jobs/businesses

**SO7**
- **Headline Evidence**: North Ayrshire is part of wider economy
- **Our Tasks**: Improve transport, energy, water, and broadband infrastructure
- **What we will achieve**: More jobs/businesses

**SO8**
- **Headline Evidence**: North Ayrshire under-represented in funding allocations
- **Our Tasks**: Developing statement of North Ayrshire offer
- **What we will achieve**: More jobs/businesses

**SO5**: Transform deprived areas in North Ayrshire by delivering a co-ordinated approach for each area.
**SO6**: Support regeneration and development in town centres and retaining them as centres to encourage investment in North Ayrshire.
**SO7**: To improve North Ayrshire's connectivity to neighbouring areas, the West of Scotland, Scotland, the UK and internationally.
**SO8**: Reflect on current strategies and ensure that new approaches to support and enhance the area are developed.
If you would like more information about business opportunities available in North Ayrshire - or details on the support we can offer your business - contact our Economic Development Service:
economicdevelopmentadmin@north-ayrshire.gov.uk
01294 225180
www.northayrshire.com | www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk