

## ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE

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### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members approved a new Economic Strategy for Argyll and Bute in March 2019 and a high level economic recovery plan in June 2020 for the Argyll and Bute region in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. In August 2020, a further report to the Business Continuity Committee identified key objectives and actions that needed to be taken forward to assist with our economic recovery. The new actions that formed part of the Economic Recovery Plan took account of our previously identified economic priorities, changing Government economic themes and priorities and likely sources of external funding to help the council and our partners to deliver these priorities going forward. During 2021, many of these actions were taken forward, and reported to relevant council committees as and when considered appropriate.
- 1.2 This report now provides Members with a brief economic overview and then goes on to provide an update on progress on the both the actions agreed in the original economic strategy approved in 2019 and the subsequent recovery plan approved in 2020 that has helped inform our priority actions going forward. Appendix 1 of this report concerns an update on the 2019 Economic Strategy Actions and Appendix 2 of this report provides an update on the Economic Recovery Plan Actions that was approved in August 2020.
- 1.3 The report then goes on to identify a series of emerging economic issues and opportunities that Members may have a view on.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

- i. Consider the contents of this report and note the updated Argyll and Bute Economic Strategy Actions contained in **Appendix 1** and also note the progress of the Economic Recovery Plan Actions identified in **Appendix 2** subject to any comments Members wish to make.
- ii. Consider and note the intention to look at future economic priorities given the rapidly changing economy.

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Members approved a new Economic Strategy for Argyll and Bute in March 2019 that contained a series of actions and a high level economic recovery plan in June 2020 for the Argyll and Bute region in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. In August 2020 a further report to the Business Continuity Committee of the council identified key objectives and priority actions that needed to be taken forward to assist with our economic recovery. These actions took account of our overarching vision, our previously identified economic priorities, changing Government economic themes and priorities and likely sources of external funding to help the council and our partners to deliver these priorities going forward. During 2020 and 2021 many of these actions linked to both key documents have been completed, or are still in an implementation phase, with regular updates and reports to relevant council committees as and when considered appropriate. It should be noted that these reports are often accompanied by press releases for the benefit of the wider public.
- 2.2 This report now provides Members with a detailed update on this progress to date in relation to the identified outcomes and associated actions, and further identifies additional areas of work together with our economic priorities going forward. These priorities are designed to take full account of the changing global economy, the need for a green and inclusive economic recovery together with other UK and Scottish Government priorities, regional and local issues. As well as addressing economic challenges it needs to be recognised that our priorities are increasingly aligned to the many economic opportunities that are emerging as the new economic situation we now find ourselves in continues to evolve. That said, it has still has to be fully understood as a direct consequence of continued uncertainty assisting our local economy may need further adjustment to our economic actions in due course. This will be subject to a further discussion with our key partners and also Members. A further report on priority economic actions will then come to Members for their further consideration and approval.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:

- i. Consider the contents of this report and note the updated Argyll and Bute Economic Strategy Actions contained in **Appendix 1** and also note the progress of the Economic Recovery Plan Actions identified in **Appendix 2** subject to any comments Members wish to make.
- ii. Consider and note the intention to look at future economic priorities given the rapidly changing economy.

## **4.0 DETAILS**

- 4.1 Members approved the new Argyll and Bute Economic Strategy in 2019. The Actions from this have been identified in **Appendix 1** of this report. As the pandemic developed and made a number of fundamental differences to the priorities of Government and our economy a high level Argyll and Bute Economic Recovery Framework was approved at the June Business Continuity Committee in 2020 followed by more detailed Economic Recovery Plan including actions in August 2020. The actions identified in the plan are identified in **Appendix 2** of this report.
- 4.2 Following these approvals Officers have been working in collaboration with numerous partners to achieve the aims of the agreed objectives through the delivery of the identified actions. This has been taken forward by taking into account the emerging economic themes of both the UK and Scottish Governments and balancing this against the resources of the council and the availability of external funding that is made available to the council through increasingly competitive funding streams i.e. Regional Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) and the Community Renewal Fund (CRF).

## **ASSESSING THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS**

- 4.3 The pandemic and other global factors have had a significant and lasting impact on our local economy, and has been recorded throughout the pandemic by our monthly economic updates and also as part of the established Economic Resilience Forum. The Forum meets on a regular basis and is chaired by HIE and includes key representatives from the public and private sectors. The lockdowns, and subsequent Government restrictions led to a sharp decline in our tourism and hospitality industries that form a major share of Argyll and Bute's private sector.
- 4.4 There was also a similar negative impact in a number of other key business sectors such as logistics, retail, construction, food and drink production and suppliers, and specialised professional services. This resulted in a significant number of local workers being placed on Furlough (at its peak 18% of total jobs in our region were furloughed through the UK Government scheme that was initially phased out in August and ended in October 2021).
- 4.5 In addition, there was also a substantial rise in claimant numbers across much of Argyll and Bute. This rise in the claimant count remained the case

throughout the lockdown period and was very slow to recover until the tourist and hospitality sector was allowed to partially reopen in the summer. The council publishes economic updates every month that Members can access.

- 4.6 Despite substantial recovery the claimant count still remains above pre pandemic levels in most parts of Argyll, most notably Bute, Cowal, and South Kintyre. This is despite a significant number of vacancies that are not able to be filled. It should also be noted that there was also a concern at the time that the ending of Furlough in October 2021 would then lead to a rapid rise in claimant counts. While this did not happen many people either left the workforce to retire, to relocate to another area for family or lifestyle reasons. Others were indeed fortunate to find work in another business sectors, often better paid than their original employment and/or offering better terms and conditions. This has placed a pressure on lower paid sectors such as hospitality and home care for example.
- 4.7 Another clear issue that has emerged however is a significant and growing skills gap with shortages of key workers in specialist positions i.e. chefs, lorry drivers, joiners, care workers and people with digital skills. Whilst this was already a known factor across Scotland, including in Argyll and Bute, the pandemic has exacerbated this situation with many businesses unable to fully open up again as staff are simply not available or real pressure to increase salary levels means less staff can be employed. This is a significant issue for the future of our economy as businesses will be unable to grow if there is insufficient staff to do the work. It is also an issue for the future delivery of public services which are also experiencing key staff shortages compounded by an ageing workforce. At this time there are 850 live job vacancies across Argyll and Bute.
- 4.8 Another factor worth noting has been global supply chain issues with shortages and corresponding rising costs in critical materials such as timber, concrete and steel. It is hoped that this may be a temporary issue but the backlog caused by the global shutdowns both here, and across the world, has led to a sustained period of higher costs and significant delays in obtaining materials at the right time and place which in turn impacts on productivity and ultimately the deliverability of new capital projects. Rising energy costs is another significant factor that will continue to be an issue throughout 2022 and beyond for households and business.
- 4.9 The impact of the pandemic has not been completely negative however. The support given by both Governments and channelled through the council and our partners such as HIE and Visit Scotland has enabled many businesses to continue to trade or at least survive until they can reopen. In excess of £91m in grant support has been distributed through a wide variety of funding streams targeted at different business sectors and individuals. The speedy distribution of these funds involved an intense effort over a sustained period of time by Economic Growth staff working with other Council colleagues. This work was on top of their normal work activities conducted mainly from their homes and this has been recognised by the Council and our partners.

- 4.10 The resourcefulness of local companies to find new income streams, combined with the increased use of digital technology and communication platforms, to reach new markets/customers has enabled some existing businesses not only to survive but also to grow and provide new products/services to their customers. A number of new businesses have also emerged at a time of great uncertainty with building warrants and planning application numbers returning to almost pre pandemic levels.
- 4.11 In response to the impacts of the pandemic the council approved an **Argyll and Bute Economic Recovery Plan in August 2020** and this continues to guide our economic priorities at this time with progress on delivering our key economic objectives and associated actions identified in **Appendix 2** of this report.
- 4.12 The extent of progress made with individual actions has been heavily influenced by the constraints and issues presented by the ongoing Covid19 pandemic and the speed of recovery across different sectors. Other key factors include the collective resources we, and our partners have available, the success, or otherwise, of our external funding bids together with new legislative requirements of the Scottish Government.

## 5.0 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 It is reassuring to see that the economic themes and priorities identified in the 2019 Argyll and Bute Economic Strategy, the associated Rural Growth Deal and the subsequent high level Economic Recovery Framework and associated Action Plan approved in June/August 2020, all remain relevant and closely aligned to national economic themes.
- 5.2 This includes new Government priorities that have developed further over recent months as a result of the pandemic and its subsequent impacts on our economy that are still to fully reveal themselves. Overall it is considered that these strategic documents together with the themes of the Rural Growth Deal that they are closely aligned to our priorities continue to remain a strong foundation for moving forward in terms of our economic and social recovery across Argyll and Bute.
- 5.3 There has been a huge amount of delivery undertaken by the council and our partners including numerous community initiatives that have helped to transform our places and create new employment opportunities.
- 5.4 This programme of economic activity has in turn led to significant private sector investment in many parts of Argyll and Bute. There also appears to be a growing interest in people choosing to live in our communities taking advantage of our high quality of life we can offer local residents. It is hoped that they can bring employment opportunities with them.
- 5.5 That said, the economy is continuing to change and there is now a need to re-examine our economic priorities going forward, working with our partners,

across the public, private and third sectors and understanding the views of our elected Members.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Council continues to develop its plans for economic and social recovery in response to the Covid19 pandemic. Our area was hit very hard in terms of both economic and social impacts in common with much of the national and global economy. In particular, the tourism and hospitality sector, which is the dominant business sector in Argyll continues to have a very difficult journey to return to the growth of visitor numbers it enjoyed in recent years pre pandemic.
- 6.2 That all said, the local economy has rebounded well when it was allowed to reopen and engage with their customers old and new. Employment levels have recovered to a greater extent but there is still a higher level of claimant count in parts of Argyll and Bute despite a high number of existing vacancies. A corresponding skills gap explains some of this combined with many people choosing to take a different direction in their lives following the pandemic.
- 6.3 The council created a new Economic Strategy in 2019 with progress on agreed actions contained in **Appendix 1** of this report. In response to the pandemic impacts however a new Economic Recovery Plan was approved in August 2020 and this is being progressed by council officers and our partners. The Plan is considered to be a strong foundation on which to build an economic recovery for the region. However, there is a continuing need to re-prioritise our actions and projects given the economic and social impacts we are currently facing such as skill shortages, rising material/energy costs etc. and also to align with national recovery themes and new funding opportunities. Progress on this plan and key actions, including a number of new actions that are included in **Appendix 2** of this report.
- 6.4 The report then talks about next steps and stresses the need to prioritise our economic actions going forward, working with our partners across different sectors, and understanding the views of elected members. These new economic priorities will be brought back to elected members for their consideration and approval.

## 7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Policy - None arising from this report.
- 7.2 Financial - None arising from this report
- 7.3 Legal - No legal issues
- 7.4 HR - This will need to be resourced from existing staff.

- 7.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
- 7.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics: There are no equal opportunities implications.
  - 7.5.2 Socio-economic Duty: It is intended that by implementing our economic and social recovery it will best support the social and economic needs of our communities across Argyll and Bute.
  - 7.5.3 Islands: None arising from this report; the economic and social needs of our islands will require to be fully considered as we move forward.
- 7.6 Risk - There is a risk that if we do not look to our region's economic recovery now opportunities and assistance will be missed.
- 7.7 Climate Change - There will be a key focus on a green economic recovery going which Argyll and Bute is well placed to deliver given our abundant natural resources.
- 7.8 Customer Service - There are no customer service implications.

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Kirsty Flanagan

**Policy Lead Economy and Rural Growth:** Councillor Robin Currie

May 2022

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## **APPENDICES:**

**APPENDIX 1** – The 2019 Argyll and Bute Economic Action Plan – Progress Update

**APPENDIX 2** – The 2020 Economic Recovery Plan: List of current and committed economic projects (updated May 2022)

## APPENDIX 1

### Argyll and Bute Economic Action Plan

#### Critical Economic Infrastructure – to national and international markets

#### Routes to Market

Key Outcome	ACTIONS	EDST Role	Delivery Partner(s)	STATUS	Link To 2020 Economic Recovery Plan
Securing routes to market for our residents, businesses and visitors	Inform and influence the review of the National Transport Strategy 2/STPR2	Influence	Scottish Government; Transport Scotland; Roads and Amenity Services; SPT; Hi-Trans; Abellio; Scotrail	COMPLETED STPR2 response to be considered at March EDI	Completed
	Secure Transport Connectivity Investment through our Rural Growth Deal that supports the growth of our economy.	Influence and Facilitate through RGD	UK and Scottish Governments; Transport Scotland; Hi-Trans; SPT; Abellio; Scotrail.	The transport elements of the RGD were removed except for the UAV Hub at Oban that is proceeding to Full Business Case funded by UK CRF.	See I2
	Inform our Regional Transport Strategies for Argyll and Bute that meets the needs of our economy.	Facilitate	Transport Scotland; SPT; Hi-Trans; Roads and Amenity Services; Planning and Regulatory Services;	COMPLETED	Completed
	To establish Oban Airport as a regional hub connecting to the central belt and the Highlands and islands region.	Influence and Facilitate through RGD	Scottish and UK Governments; HIAL; HIE; Hi Trans; Transport Scotland;	Currently focusing on UAV Hub through RGD and Levelling Up Fund Bid; Fuel supply secured; landing assist equipment 100% funded.	I2



## Better Connected

Key Outcome	ACTIONS	EDST Role	Delivery Partner(s)	STATUS	Link To 2020 Economic Recovery Plan
A better connected place for our residents, businesses and visitors	Lobby the National R100 and mobile digital programmes to provide 100% coverage for our geographic region.	Influence and Facilitation	UK and Scottish Governments; BT; Digital Scotland; HIE.	COMPLETED R100 both the north and south lots awarded; continuing to lobby for better broadband and mobile connectivity.	11
	Secure a Rural Growth Deal investment in digital Infrastructure to deliver innovative Fibre to Fibre Ultrafast technology and address gaps in 4g mobile coverage.	Influence and Facilitation through RGD	UK and Scottish Governments; HIE; BT; Digital Scotland.	COMPLETED Digital included in RGD Heads of Terms	Completed
	Influencing investment in our energy grid	Influence	ABRA; National Grid; SSE; Energy Companies	ONGOING Substantial investment in Kintyre/Mid Argyll; North Lorn next phase.	15
	Secure external investment in our active travel network	Influence and facilitate through Sustrans and RGD	Scottish Government; Sustrans; Paths for All; Hi Trans; SPT;	ONGOING Substantial investment secured.	NE3

**Place and People – skills, residents, visitors & Businesses**

**Stronger Places**

<b>Key Outcome</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>EDST Role</b>	<b>Delivery Partner(s)</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>Link To 2020 Economic Recovery Plan</b>
Creating a sense of Place through an outstanding built environment	To make best use of available external funding to deliver physical improvements to our built environment making our area more attractive to live, work and invest in.	Influence and Facilitation	Historic Environment Scotland (HES); Heritage lottery Fund (HLF); HIE; and Scottish Government.	ONGOING Lochgilphead CARs and Helensburgh CARs funding secured;	PL2
	To deliver a Sense of Place Fund through the Rural Growth Deal focusing on smaller communities.	Influence and Facilitation	UK and Scottish Governments; HES; HLF.	ONGOING Included within RGD Heads of Terms	PL2
Creating a clear vision for our communities	Supporting local communities to retain and develop BIDs and community economic alliances	Influence and Facilitation	Oban, Dunoon and Helensburgh BIDs; Bute Islands Alliance; Inspire Dunoon; HIE; BIDs Scotland; SURF.	ONGOING Bute Bid successful ballot;	PL2;PL3
	We will look to inform the content of the National Islands Plan	Influence and Facilitation	Argyll Strategic Islands Group	COMPLETED	Completed
	Supporting local communities in securing assets	Facilitation	Community Groups; HIE	ONGOING	PL5
To raise our profile as a centre for cultural	To support the development of key cultural hubs	Influence and Facilitate	UK and Scottish Governments; HES; HLF; Community	ONGOING CHArts supported by	PL6

activity and create a vibrant and sustainable creative sector			Groups and Trusts; Creative Scotland; HIE.	council to develop heritage trails; Rockfield completed and Kilmartin Museum on site.	
	To distribute a strategic events and festivals budget subject to available resources	Facilitate	Community Groups; Events Scotland; Creative Scotland	ONGOING  Strategic Events and Festivals held annually subject to Covid restrictions	PL4
	To support the development of a sustainable Creative Business sector through the creation of a network of effective regional hubs.	Influence and Facilitate through CHArts	Creative Scotland; CHArts/Creative sector.	ONGOING  CHArts established/disrupted by Covid	Not being taken Forward
	To support Film and TV production in Argyll	Influence and Facilitate	Council Services; Creative Scotland; Screen Scotland.	ONGOING  Web site established and funding protocol for council sites	
Create Key worker housing to support economic growth	Secure additional housing investment in the Rural Growth Deal	Influence and Facilitate through the RGD	UK and Scottish Governments; HIE; Construction companies; Strategic Housing and Communities Forum; Housing service;	ONGOING  Housing included in the RGD Heads of Terms	PL3

## Skills for Work

Key Outcome	ACTIONS	EDST Role	Delivery Partner(s)	STATUS	Link To 2020 Economic Recovery Plan
The creation of an inclusive economy	We will look to make work pay through the development of a regional Fair Work Strategy that will include the promotion of an Argyll Region Living Wage.	Influence and Facilitate	Private sector; HIE; Scottish Enterprise; DYW	ONGOING	P1 to P8; PL5
	We will deliver an employability service that assists people with multiple barriers into employment on a commercial basis.	Influence and Facilitate through Employability	Scottish Government;	ONGOING	P3;P4
Improving people's working skills to achieve higher paid employment	Align the region's skills system to support our key growth areas through a Regional Skills Strategy	Influence and Facilitate through the RGD	SDS; Argyll College; UHI; SAMs; HIE; SE; Education Service	ONGOING	P5;P6
	Support delivery of the Developing Young Workforce Programme	Influence	Skills Partnership; DYW Argyll; Scottish Government; private sector; SDS	ONGOING	P4
We will ensure that 95% of school leavers across Argyll enter employment,	Implement DYW programme	Influence	Scottish Government; DYM; Argyll College UHI; HIE; SDS; Education service.	ONGOING	P4

training or education.					
We will increase the total number of employees and businesses across Argyll that work within our key business sectors identified in the Rural Growth Deal	Establish Newton Rooms/STEM portals through the Rural Growth Deal	Influence	UK and Scottish Governments; SDS; Education service	ONGOING  Included in RGD Heads of Terms; Dunoon STEM Hub in implementation stage.  Note Newton Rooms not being taken forward due to revenue cost implications	P6
To expand our academic offer In Argyll and Bute that meets the needs of our key business sectors.	Establish key business clusters related to our key business sectors	Influence and facilitation through the RGD	HIE; SE; MOD; University of the Highlands and Islands; UK and Scottish Governments; Stirling University; Strathclyde university; Argyll College - UHI; Glasgow College; Private sector.	ONGOING  Included in RGD Heads of Terms	I3; I4
	To grow and develop Oban as a University Town to have a minimum of 1,700 students by 2030	Influence and facilitation through Oban as a University Town partnership and RGD	HIE; SAMs; Argyll College – UHI; Oban Bids; Education service; Oban Community Council;	ONGOING  Council focus now on Infrastructure and RGD Marine Training School at The European Marine Science Park.	I4
To increase the number of businesses eligible for the growth pipeline	Deliver core Business gateway support	Facilitate	HIE; SE;	COMPLETED Growth Pipeline approach has been ended.	Completed  See E1; E2 new focus

**Smart Growth – doing more that works**

**Supporting Our Priority Sectors**

<b>Key Outcome</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>EDST Role</b>	<b>Delivery Partner(s)</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>Link To 2020 Economic Recovery Plan</b>
Increase the employment opportunities and GVA of our priority sectors	Deliver a sector-specific growth programme through specialist support in tourism, food and drink, marine sciences, renewables and defence industries	Facilitate	HIE; Universities; Scottish Enterprise; AITC; Visit Scotland; Food from Argyll; Private sector; Agricultural Forum; MOD;	<b>ONGOING</b>  Focus on Tourism and Food and Drink.  Tourism Strategy renewed by Spring 22; Food and Drink Strategy commissioned due Spring 22.	E6; E8
To increase the number of visitors by 15 % and the value of Tourism to the Argyll economy by 10% by 2030.	To deliver a new Regional Tourism Strategy and 10 year Action Plan	Influence and facilitation	HIE; SE; AITC; Visit Scotland; Cal Mac; Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.	<b>SEE ABOVE</b>	E6 Visitor targets being relooked at in light of pandemic impacts
	Identify locations for future hotel investment	Influence and facilitation	Planning and Regulatory Services; AITC; Visit Scotland; SDI	<b>COMPLETED</b>	Completed
	Identify future cultural, marine and adventure tourism investment opportunities for inclusion in the Rural Growth Deal	Influence and facilitation through the RGD	Planning and Regulatory Services; AITC; Visit Scotland; SDI	<b>COMPLETED</b>	PL1
	To achieve World Host Status for Argyll	Influence and facilitation through Business Gateway	AITC; Visit Scotland; people plus.	<b>COMPLETED</b>  World Host Training completed/Funding ended	Completed
To increase the value of the Argyll	To identify and develop opportunities	Influence and facilitate	HIE; Food from Argyll; Agricultural	<b>COMPLETED</b>	E6 Completed

Food and Drink Industry	for the growth of Argyll's food & drink sector	through the RGD	Forum; Mount Stuart;	Food and Drink Strategy Completed.	
Delivery of the Maritime Change Project that best benefits the Argyll wider economy	Maintain the existing strategic partnership and implement action plan	Influence and facilitate through partnership working and the RGD	UK Government; SE; MoD; Private sector partners; SDS; SDI	ONGOING Partnership continues to hold regular meetings and take forward action plan	I4
	Secure additional investment through the Rural Growth Deal (RGD) for an Engineering business acceleration cluster.	Influence and Facilitate through the RGD	UK and Scottish Governments; SE; Strathclyde University; MoD; Private sector partners;	ONGOING Engineering Hub included in the RGD Heads of Terms	I4
To grow our population and raise our National profile as a place to live, invest, learn, do business and visit.	To secure an Argyll Rural Growth Deal	Influence and Facilitate	UK and Scottish Governments; HIE; SE; SFT;	ONGOING Heads of Terms secured moving to full deal.	I3
	To sustain and update a clear Argyll marketing and branding strategy for our region	Influence	Council Communication s team; CPP partners	ONGOING AB Placetobe branding established  Love Argyll and Bute  New Tourism Strategy Marketing Action Plan completed	E7

## Improving Innovation and Productivity

Key Outcome	ACTIONS	EDST Role	Delivery Partner(s)	STATUS	Link To 2020 Economic Recovery Plan
Establish Argyll as the natural choice for ambitious and innovative industries to grow and flourish.	Deliver phases 2 and 3 of the European Marine Science Park at Dunbeg including a new Marine Training Centre.	Influence and Facilitate Oban as a University town and RGD	UK and Scottish Governments; HIE; UHI; Argyll College – UHI; Glasgow College; HIE;SAMs; Private sector partners;	ONGOING  Phase 2 foundation and infrastructure completed; Marine Training School at Outline Business Case part of RGD.	15
	Deliver a Centre of aquaculture excellence at Machrihanish (MACC).	Influence and Facilitate through the RGD	UK and Scottish Governments; HIE; MACC; Stirling University.	ONGOING  Included in RGD Heads of Terms	14
	Secure additional investment through the Regional Growth Deal for an Industry logistics centre at Kilmory Industrial Estate	Influence and Facilitate through the RGD	UK and Scottish Governments; HIE; Private sector partners;	ONGOING  Kilmory not part of RGD; RCGF funding secured £650k; £150k of Crown Estate funding and £1m private sector funding.	14
Increase the start-up rate, growth and survival of small and medium sized businesses	Deliver core Business gateway support	Facilitate	HIE; SE	ONGOING  In addition administered with council colleagues £91m plus in business support grants in response to Covid 19 LACER Funding approved with £470k small business	E1;E2



				support in 2022/23	
	Deliver enhanced support through attracting additional external funding	Facilitate	HIE; SE	ONGOING	E2
	Deliver a comprehensive, robust and up to date economic profile for our region	Facilitate	HIE; SE	COMPLETED	P2
To lower our carbon footprint	Maintain ABRA	Influence	UK Government; National Grid;	ONGOING Meets once a year	NE1
	To examine opportunities to better utilise our renewable energy resource in Argyll and Bute	Influence	UK and Scottish Governments; ABRA;	ONGOING Looking to promote Argyll and Bute as a net positive region with potential 5GW of clean energy generation by 2032	NE1; NE2
Ensuring a modern fit for purpose energy grid	Lobby through ABRA to bring forward improvements to the national grid and take forward pilot projects that look to improve the local energy grid and increase the use of renewables	Influence and Facilitation	ABRA members; ALIE Energy; HIE; Local communities	ONGOING Major grid upgrade in Kintyre/Mid Argyll; Investment planned for North Lorn in 22/23	NE1
Create Business clusters	Identification of investor ready development opportunities and seek external funding to address critical economic infrastructure as required.	Influence and Facilitate	Planning and Regulatory Services; HIE; SE; SDI	COMPLETED Identified in Local Development Plan 2; RGD targeting investment on key strategic sites;	Completed

<b>EDST Intervention Criteria</b>	<b>Core Activities</b>
Our role is to intervene in the event of market failure with potential regional impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to broker solutions and mitigate against negative impacts.</li> </ul>
Our role is to monitor, lobby and bid for external funding to address our economic priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver Rural Growth Deal;</li> <li>• Prepare external funding updates and prepare/submit evidence for new structural funding streams.</li> </ul>
Our role is to provide local economic information and evidence to improve our economic competitiveness as a region and enable economic growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect, analyse and disseminate demographic and economic data to inform public and private sector decision makers looking to invest.</li> </ul>
Our specific role through the strategy is to ensure that housing will support economic growth in our region by being available for key workers in the right place and of the right type.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide evidence to obtain funding for key worker housing through the Rural Growth Deal.</li> </ul>
Our role is to influence, inform and lobby the Scottish Government, national and regional transport agencies for improved transport connectivity within, to and from Argyll.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the necessary justification and evidence for the delivery of critical transport infrastructure by regional and national partners.</li> </ul>
Our role here is to influence the energy industry including the national grid for the need for further investment in our energy system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with ABRA.</li> </ul>
Our role here is to facilitate minor improvements to the network, improve integration of services and examine how new technology can improve our public transport system for the benefit of the local economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with SPT and Hi Trans to attract external investment and undertake feasibility studies.</li> </ul>
Our role is to influence, inform and lobby for fit for purpose, modern digital connectivity throughout Argyll.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with our national partners to seek solutions to reduce gaps in the digital network and argue for additional investment through the RGD.</li> </ul>
Our role is to work with our partners to highlight places and individual sites in Argyll and Bute to potential investors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare data for potential investors</li> <li>• Identify sites through the LDP and provide supporting economic data as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Our role is to promote our area as a place for film and TV production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain an easy to use film support network including a dedicated web site with transparent charges for the use of council assets.</li> </ul>
Our role is to undertake area regeneration activity that has the potential to deliver transformational change to local communities that makes them investor ready.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bid for external funding for area regeneration projects.</li> <li>• Deliver agreed heritage projects.</li> </ul>

Our role is to help people with multiple barriers gain sustainable employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver Government sponsored contracts through the employability service.</li> </ul>
Our role is to support and build on the activities of developing the Young Workforce (DYW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with DYW and skills providers.</li> </ul>
Our role here is to support the growth of ambitious local SMEs that can offer additional and preferably higher value, employment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer one to one advice through Business gateway</li> <li>• Offer ERDF funding assistance</li> <li>• Deliver bespoke training event in key areas such as digital training.</li> </ul>
Our role is to work with our academic partners to expand further and higher education opportunities in Argyll.	<p>Through the Rural Growth Deal and targeted investments at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helensburgh – defence and engineering</li> <li>• SAMs at Dunbeg – marine science</li> <li>• Machrihanish/MERL – Aquaculture</li> <li>• Argyll – UHI network improvements.</li> </ul>
Our role will be to create, or take an active part in, strategic level partnerships, that have a clear aim to improve our economic performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Strategic Partnership</li> <li>• ABRA</li> <li>• Oban as a University Town</li> <li>• Maritime Change.</li> </ul>
Our role is to establish Argyll as a world class tourism destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help deliver a new strategic tourism strategy with clear priorities identified.</li> <li>• Facilitate World Host Training</li> <li>• Undertake Placemaking and Area Regeneration activity.</li> </ul>
Our role here is to inform and facilitate this process including community asset transfer and by doing so helping to secure a sustainable economic future for all our local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting external funding to undertake economic projects including RCGF</li> <li>• Asset Transfer</li> <li>• Community Renewables.</li> </ul>
Our role is to support the expansion of the food and drink industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted feasibility studies,</li> <li>• Attending promotional events</li> <li>• Supporting the expansion of Food from Argyll.</li> </ul>
Our role is to support the growth of the creative industry including supporting events with national and international appeal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with CHArts</li> <li>• Administering grants for strategic level events</li> <li>• Film and TV work.</li> </ul>
Our role here is to attract sufficient private and public investment to establish a number of business clusters with the ability to accelerate growth in higher value jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with strategic partners to deliver the RGD.</li> </ul>
Our role is to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and audit processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure proper records are kept</li> <li>• Prepare briefing papers on all aspects of economic and transport policy.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

Argyll and Bute's Economic Recovery Plan – Progress Update				
3-year horizon planning				
	Council Actions	What we WILL DELIVER	STATUS	UPDATE ON PROGRESS
<b>People</b>				
P1	Ensure the wellbeing of employees, communities and customers is carefully considered in everything we do;		Ongoing	We have applied Covid19 guidance consistently including working from home and site visit protocols; distribution of Government information and posters; offering digital meetings and implementing a recovery action plan.
P2	Fully understand the economic and social impacts of the pandemic on local people and communities;		Ongoing	Numerous work streams launched on this including actions taken through the Economic and Social Resilience Group (chaired by HIE); Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership established.
P3	Put in place employment support for newly- unemployed, under-employed and those facing redundancy including disadvantaged groups and remote rural communities;	P3 & P4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fair Start Scotland - end of March 2023 for last referrals with a final completion date of March 2024.</li> <li>• NOLB Phase 1 until end of March 2022.</li> <li>• NOLB Phase 2: from 1st April 2022.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fair Start Scotland – ongoing revisions to the marketing plan requested by PeoplePlus to be developed to promote the scheme. By end of 2021-22, 267 individuals supported since April 2018; 85 moved into work, 46 currently</li> </ul>

P4	<p>Monitor leaver destinations and work with partners to promote opportunities and careers to all young people leaving full time education during the pandemic with enhanced support for those most at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or training)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accrual of NOLB. Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF)/PESF Boost and Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) funding into 2022/23 granted complete with a grant offer letter for 2022/23 – now approved.</li> <li>• Kickstart Scheme, 16-24 year olds (DWP, UK Government, until end of March 2022) – completion autumn 2022.</li> <li>• PESF/PESF Boost until the end of March 2024.</li> <li>• YPG, 16-24 year olds, Employer Recruitment Incentive (ERI) and NOLB ERI for those aged 25+ to include the same funding terms as for YPG ERI (i.e. up to £6,000 per individual plus training up to £500 per person).</li> <li>• Pre-employment Support under YPG (16-24 year olds) and NOLB (aged 25+)</li> <li>• Long Term Unemployment Intermediate Labour Market Support (aged 25+) - end of March 2023.</li> </ul>		<p>supported pre-work and 16 receiving in-work support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kickstart Scheme, 16-24 year olds - application deadline extended to 17th December 2021 and all job starts by end of March 2022. 38 young people in work placements since April 2021, with 24 employers supported. Supporting remaining placement starts until this programme concludes early autumn 2022.</li> <li>• PESF/PESF Boost continues to provide key interventions for each of the 6 target groups. By end of 2021-22, 43 parents supported of which 30 unemployed and 13 low income employed since June 2020, with 7 progressed into work.</li> <li>• YPG Employer Recruitment Incentive - continued delivery by Employability Team. Phase 1 - 62 placements against a target of 60. Phase 2 now being rolled out, with 90 placements by end of March 2023. NOLB ERI (25+) with 10 ERI placements by end of March 2023.</li> <li>• By end of 2021-22, NOLB ERI (previously Argyll &amp; Bute Employer Recruitment and Training Incentive (ABERTI)) – 34 participants supported since January 2020: 24</li> </ul>
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				<p>leavers/completers and 19 moved into work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• YPG Pre-employment Support - partner organisations, including the third sector, delivered 74 formal learning agreements for young people by the end of March 2022. The target was originally 60, YPG Pre-employment Support for 2022-23 (partner delivery) has a target of 54 individuals, where 60% enter a positive destination.</li><li>• Pre-employment Support, NOLB (aged 25+) (partner delivery) has a target of 42 individuals, where 60% enter a positive destination.</li><li>• Long Term Unemployment Intermediate Labour Market Support (aged 25+) focuses on the delivery of a caseload of 28 (partner delivery), where 70% enter sustainable employment by March 2023.</li><li>• ABEP improvement Action Plan completed and residual actions now incorporated into the ABEP Delivery Plan, 2022-25 (working document) and submitted to the Scottish Government.</li><li>• UK Shared Prosperity Funding Investment Plan, 2022-25 to be prepared by 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022. In-</li></ul>
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				house employability provision to be incorporated under the people & skills investment priority, as team reliant of external funding.
P5	Identify critical skills gaps post pandemic;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work will be advanced at a local level through the Argyll &amp; Bute Employability Partnership, regionally at the H&amp;I Skills Leadership Group / COHI and nationally through SLAED People/ Employability group.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Incorporate a people and skills intervention for Argyll and Bute within the UK Shared Prosperity Funding Investment Plan, 2022-25 to be prepared by 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2022.
P6	Progress Skills, Education and Training theme of the Rural Growth Deal and Assess workforce and skills;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery by RSAP under the RGD.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>STANTEC commissioned to prepare OBCs to FBCs under the Rural Skills Accelerator Programme (RSAP).</p> <p>Dunoon Community STEM hub at design stage</p>
P7	Secure social value opportunities from Council procurement activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local authority PACE officers to be funded by SG (£80k) (Duration of post tbc).</li> </ul>	Change	Unable to recruit a PACE Key Workers. Managed to recruit an Employment Engagement Worker cover NOLB funding, including PACE. The remaining funding under PACE had to be returned to the Scottish Government.
P8	Develop a communication strategy that positions Argyll and Bute as a place to do business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business intelligence to support communication strategy</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>Monthly Claimant Count and Economic Updates issued each month. A cross departmental statistical group has been formed.</p> <p>Business Gateway continues to gather key business intelligence as appropriate.</p>

				Invest in Argyll web pages published.
Place				
PL1	Continue to implement Council's area regeneration programme of works;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on Place and the 20 minute neighbourhood and deliver the Town Centre Fund projects for 20/21 – final spend Sept 2021.</li> <li>• Successfully deliver 4 Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) across the area – Dunoon, Rothesay, Lochgilphead and Helensburgh over the next 5 years.</li> <li>• Deliver Hermitage Park for people projects – end Dec 2022.</li> <li>• Manage the delivery of the successful secured Regeneration Capital (RCGF) grant contracts for Kilmartin Museum, Ulva, MAC Pool as well as the council grant for Kilmartin.</li> <li>• Successfully deliver remaining Tarbert &amp; Lochgilphead Regeneration Fund projects – 3 projects remaining.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>Substantial progress made on project delivery.</p> <p>CARs schemes all on track and being implemented with regular reports on progress to Area Committee and EDI Committee.</p> <p>Hermitage Park Project completed; Bothy Project completed. Kilmartin Museum on site expected completion Summer 22; MAC Pool on site to be completed Spring 22; 3 additional projects secured RCGF. Lochgilphead Front Green on site to be completed Spring 22; Ardrishaig Public Realm at tender stage. Gibraltar Street Oban at design stage. Rural Growth Deal Place and Tourism investments OBC being developed Levelling Up Regeneration Bids being prepared Rothesay and Dunoon.</p>
PL2	Continue to bid for external funding to support all capital and revenue area regeneration activity that supports strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successfully secured £1.7 million for Kilmory, Port Ellen and Colonsay projects – delivery 2021/22/23.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Three Expression of Interests were submitted by the deadline for round 4 of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (13 <sup>th</sup> August 2021). South Islay



	<p>priorities of the council and our partners;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to bid to RCGF annual funding calls (5 yr commitment in SG budget) – next call Spring 2021 including supporting community projects to access funding (links to PL5).</li> <li>• Secure Argyll and Bute’s share of SG Place Based Investment Programme which will be backed by £275m for community led regeneration and town centre revitalization.to be delivered over next 5 yrs though working with local government on how it will be best deployed to have greatest impacts locally.“</li> <li>• Continue to work with key external funders partners to secure future funding for Argyll and Bute – including HES, HLF, Lottery community fund, RCGF and SG islands team.</li> <li>• Work with Scotland Towns partnership and Oban and Dunoon Bids and support Rothesay ballot to secure future funding to our towns via the Bids.</li> <li>• Host Round 4 of Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund applications in 2021. Potential increase in available budget.</li> </ul>		<p>Development Trust (motorhome site and facilities expansion) application was successful, but Staffa (pathway improvements) and Kilmartin Museum (car park expansion) were unsuccessful.</p> <p>Rothesay Bid achieved a successful ballot.</p> <p>28 Place based projects successfully delivered.</p> <p>Place making Vision document for Argyll and Bute to be prepared linked to External Funding opportunities and local/national priorities.</p>
PL3	<p>- Implement Town and local Centre recovery plans; - Implement Strategic Housing Investment Plan;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering shop local campaign through Scotland’s Towns Partnership (STP) and SG funding – successful bid, delivery 2021/22.</li> </ul>	21/22 to 22/23	<p>Shop Local campaign successfully implemented and shopfront grants to over 150 premises with latest phase being rural shops; shop local card launched in pilot year.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver TCF small scale shopfront improvement scheme –launch Nov 2020 on web site– spend sept 2021 and final reporting end.</li> </ul>		Shop Local Card Launched and funding secured until 2024. 128 businesses signed up. LACER funding circa £800k on Shop Local Card targeted at households in receipt of council tax rebate.
PL4	Launch Strategic Events and festivals fund;		Ongoing	21/22 Funding Round approved; Supplementary round to be awarded June 22; Further round to be held in 22/23.
PL5	Continue working with local communities to help them secure a sustainable economic future including asset transfer;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are delivering Strategic Events and Festivals 2021/22 – funding round launched Oct, award, score, award and then issue contracts and then monitor. Manage MOD funding grant until 2024 event.</li> <li>• Lobby the SG/UKG for a future local community led economic development programme to replace the current LEADER 2014-2020 programme.</li> <li>• Lobby SG/UKG for a future Fisheries and Maritime Fund to replace EMFF programme, 2014-2020</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>Economic Growth Manager has inputted to key meetings with the Scottish Government Rural Communities Director on a one-to-one basis for Argyll and Bute, focusing on how a future LEADER type programme could be delivered and administered.</p> <p>Commissioned SKS Scotland to undertake a study to develop a 'Toolkit for Community Led Local Development across A&amp;B' fully funded (£50k) by the Scottish Government, which was completed by the end of March 2022. Key input from Community Development, Argyll and Bute Council and CLD, Live Argyll in framing this research. Now published.</p>

				<p>Proposals underway for a new CLLD programme further to the announcement of £11.6m of CLLD funding in 2022/23. Argyll and Bute Council has registered its interest to be involved in the delivery of this programme: either Economic Growth of Community Development – ongoing discussions.</p> <p>Successful bid to UKCRF - 8 projects funded out of 11. Total grant award, circa £2m now being implemented with end date Dec 22.</p>
PL6	Continue working with third sector partners in securing and re-purposing cultural assets as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with Inveraray community council in regard to community hall and Pier</li> <li>Support given to assist Anchor Bar Community purchase</li> </ul>		<p>Bid being prepared to enable community to purchase Inveraray Pier.</p> <p>Anchor Bar Port Bannatyne secured for community with funding from UK Government.</p>
PL7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links back to PL1 including Kilmartin Museum and Rockfield and support to CHArts and working with Creative Scotland to secure funding for CHArts and support for VACMA grants.</li> </ul>		<p>Kilmartin Museum on site; Rockfield completed; CHArts supported in 2022/23. Discussions with Creative Scotland to support the work of CHArts and their activities.</p> <p>Oban City bid unsuccessful. Agreement to apply for City of Culture Status 2029.</p>

PL8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with SG island team to represent our island communities and work to support island communities and projects and inform the Islands Infrastructure Plan to be delivered, funding over 5 yrs – repopulation project.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>Repopulation agenda being progressed through the COHI Population Working Group (officers). Settlement Officer now in post (one year post – 50% funded by the council and 50% from HIE) to take this agenda forward.</p> <p>Facilitated the delivery of various Island Infrastructure Funds with potential new bid being prepared for submission June 22.</p> <p>Islay identified as Carbon Neutral Island by 2040.</p>
<b>Infrastructure</b>				
I1	Continue to lobby for an accelerated digital infrastructure investment by national Governments and private industry;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will deliver secured external funding, via preparation of bids to BDUK, Sustrans, Transport Scotland, SPT, HITRANS, Scottish Govt, UK Govt funding streams.</li> <li>• We will deliver digital and transport infrastructure projects across Argyll, utilising and maximising external capital.</li> </ul>		<p>Scottish Govt. R100 programme has started to make full fibre connections available in Helensburgh (Central Lot) and Oban and surrounding area (North Lot), as build continues more connections will be made available. Openreach have released further exchange areas across A&amp;B that are going to see commercial build as their fibre first programme continues to expand providing premises that already have access to SFB access to a full fibre solution.</p>

12	Continue to lobby for transport investment through the STRP2 and the Argyll Rural Growth deal;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will deliver responses to national consultations that safeguard ABC's interests and lobby national bodies such as the National Transport Strategy and Strategic Transport Project Review 2</li> </ul>		STPR2 consultation completed with council submission approved at March EDI.
13	Continue to attract external funding to address local infrastructure issues to help facilitate business expansion including Rural growth Deal;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will deliver robust business cases for the £50M Rural Growth Deal covering themes such as aquaculture, tourism, low carbon, skills, places, digital, and innovation.</li> <li>Host Round 4 and 5 of Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund applications in 2021. Potential increase in available budget.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	RSAP – 3 OBCs to be developed with Stantec. Round 4 of RTIF concluded. Round 5 of RTIF confirmed and 2 strategic development bids secured. Arrochar (Cobbler) Carpark Helensburgh and Lomond and Benmore Gardens, Cowal.
14	Expand existing and create new employment and business areas;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will deliver circa £2M air services contract to our fragile islands, to allow access to healthcare, education and employment. Thus improving accessibility to goods, services and social and leisure travel to enhance quality of life, increase community confidence and help stem depopulation.</li> <li>Inward investment opportunities with external partners and businesses e.g. Spaceport/ Distilleries/ Aquaculture (seaweed) / Food &amp; Drink</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Inward investment opportunities progressing with Business Gateway (part of Economic Growth team), individual businesses and HIE, across all sectors. Current focus is on distilleries for Cowal and Kintyre. Ongoing commitment to reviewing and approving projects under the Scottish Government's Food Processing, Manufacturing and Co-operative Grant (current round 106 projects, circa, £11m).
15	Continue to lobby and secure improvements to our energy grid;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold meetings of ABRA</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Latest meeting of ABRA held in December 2021; major grid improvements underway or completed from Kintyre to Inveraray; Moving on to upgrades in North Lorn; Attended All Energy Conference May 22.

16	Continue to develop and implement Council's Capital Investment Strategy and Capital Plan to deliver road, marine, ITC, Council buildings, LIVE Argyll and Learning Estate that meets needs of our community and Council Services		Ongoing	Regular reports submitted on capital projects progress to council.
<b>Enterprise</b>				
E1	Continue to implement national business support programme and offer clear advice and information to local businesses;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Business Gateway activity.</li> <li>• Business Gateway Local Growth Accelerator Programme (LGAP), Repurposed for recovery.</li> <li>• Business Gateway, Phase 5, Digital Boost Programme.</li> <li>• Scottish Government COVID-19 Business Support Funding.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>LGAP – end of 2021/22: 118 unique businesses supported with a combined turnover of £29.6m. The projected impact of this support is a £46.6m increase in turnover and 595 additional employees.</p> <p>DigitalBoost – end of 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 105 one-hour surgeries with a digital expert have been completed.</li> <li>• 93 in-depth (typically 2 day) digital one to one support sessions with a digital expert have been approved.</li> <li>• 156 workshops, webinars and coaching sessions delivered.</li> </ul> <p>SG COVID-19 Business Support: Circa £91m disseminated by Council Departments including Economic</p>

				<p>Growth officers (includes Business Gateway) – all funding continues to be notified through <a href="http://www.findbusinesssupport.gov.scot">www.findbusinesssupport.gov.scot</a>.</p> <p>Specifically, Economic Growth administered 17 different Scottish Government COVID Business Support Schemes, where more than 17,400 grants were processed, resulting in £49.7m paid out in COVID grants to support local businesses.</p> <p>Local Authority Covid Economic Recovery (LACER) funding £475k funding aimed at SMEs and hardest hit areas of Argyll and Bute following pandemic.</p>
E2	To continue to lobby for continued business support, policy and fiscal incentives and ongoing economic recovery funding;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transient Visitor Levy – future discussions.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>Medium term recovery fiscal policy discussions. Scottish Government announced that visitor levy will be examined in 2022.</p> <p>Scottish Government Population Working Group re-established.</p>
E3	Continue to participate in the Argyll Economic Resilience Forum and address emerging critical business issues;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vice chair of AERF.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>More focus to be given to actions and timescales - short to longer term.</p> <p>AERF looking to feed in Argyll and Bute Economic Priorities to newly established Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership.</p>

E4	Provide clear advice and information on social distancing requirements for local businesses;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take part in and undertake actions as part of the Coming out of lockdown group to support our town centre businesses.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Advice consistently provided 2 additional officers employed to help businesses on a temporary basis funded by the Scottish Government
E5	Implement an easing from lockdown officer group to enable businesses to adapt service delivery and enable expansion into appropriate public realm areas;		Completed	Group has completed its work; Covid compliance officers continuing for an additional year to assist economic recovery and safe working practices.
E6	Develop key sector recovery plans;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation of key sector recovery plans focusing largely on the sectors where we have current capacity.</li> <li>Work closely with off shore wind developers and renewable sector to assist in the Scotwind leasing round.</li> <li>Work closely with Screen Scotland.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	More work required to take forward an Economic and Social Recovery Plan, complete with key outcomes and proposed impacts. Lead by HIE. W1 Off shore wind site preferred bidder announced Scottish Power Renewables – 2 GW Film and TV web site established. Food and Drink Strategy completed. Tourism Strategy to be approved Spring 22 by Council and Strategic Tourism Partnership
E7	Take forward critical destination management marketing;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop through partnership working with industry representative bodies.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Marketing focus approved for 2022. AERF, plus national bodies such as VisitScotland, Scotland Food & Drink, Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre, etc.
E8	To identify and market our key investment opportunities;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to identify and market our key investment opportunities through engagement with industry, stakeholders and Community Planning Partners (links with I4 above).</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Current focus on new distilleries - confidential information. Significant expansion of tourism and renewables underway across Argyll and Bute on multiple sites.



<b>Natural Environment – low carbon Economy</b>				
NE1	Continue the work of the Council's climate change board and Climate Change Environmental Action Group;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Input to Decarbonisation Plan and support climate change board through delivery of net zero focused projects including Islay Local energy network project (RGD) and continue to work with public and private partners via ABRA.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Transition to net zero consideration to be given to all project and investment opportunities. Climate Emergency declared by Council; Council invested £1m in renewables on council properties; Islay RGD Energy project at Outline Business Case; Hold ABRA meetings.
NE2	Examine opportunities to develop the hydrogen economy at a local level and the sustainable expansion of renewable energy generation;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with partners including HIE, MACC and private sector partners including Scottish Power to examine and drive forward the potential to deliver a hydrogen hub at Campbeltown.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Economic Growth Officer economic intelligence and data input to the initial MACC Hydrogen Bid to UKCRF for MACC base - which was successful. Hydroban hydrogen project proposed for Levelling Up Bid
NE3	Continue to lobby for and invest in our active travel networks;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will deliver a programme of over £2M sustainable transport projects across our communities, maximising on external funding streams such as Scottish Government Cycling, Walking and Safer Routes funding, Smarter Choices Smarter Places funding and Scottish Government 'Places for Everyone' (administered by Sustrans).</li> </ul>		Secured a total of £2.24M investment for active travel across Argyll and Bute through successful competitive challenge funding applications in 2020/21.  As no Council funds allocated for active travel infrastructure in 2020/21 have achieved the investment of £2.24M at no cost to the Council.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximise value for money, by securing external match funding, to more than double the value of Council funds invested in sustainable active travel infrastructure and improving community links.</li> </ul>		
NE4	To identify natural capital investment opportunities for communities and business;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on natural capital investment aligned to key sectors opportunities (aligned with E8 and I4).</li> <li>Work with offshore wind developers to look at the local economic opportunities that may be delivered from development of the W1 off shore wind site.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	W1 site awarded to Scottish Power Renewables in January 2022; Looking to work with the preferred bidder to maximise community benefit and ensure regulatory process requirements are all met.

#### Additional Actions

PL5	Making the link between place based investments and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot in Dunoon to employ 11/2 posts to undertake 3 year pilot in Dunoon all funding secured</li> </ul>	22 to 24	Main post holder appointed
PL2 / I3	Community Renewal Fund and Levelling Up Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To submit Community Renewal Fund Bid</li> <li>To submit Bids for Levelling UP Regeneration and Transport identified projects</li> </ul>	2022 to 2024/25	Community Renewal Fund 8 bids successful with £2.03m of funding including admin costs. Two Bids currently being prepared for Levelling Up to be submitted 6 <sup>th</sup> July 22.