

## Management Committee

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023



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## Community Learning and Development (CLD) Digital Inclusion

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the CPP Management Committee with an overview of the development to date of a strategic partnership approach to ensure that Digital Inclusion plays a key part of our CLD delivery.

### 2.0 Recommendations

The CPP Management Committee are asked to:

- Note that the CLD Strategic Partnership Plan 2021-2024 references Digital Skills as a priority theme for the duration of the three year plan.
- Note the Digital mapping exercise carried out by Hall & Aitken, which has created a set of suggested priorities, and that the CLD Partnership Digital Workstream Group will review recommendations and report back to the CLD Partnership.

### 3.0 Background

Argyll and Bute's CLD Strategic Partnership Plan 2021-2024 works to develop six key themes. These are;

1. Digital Skills
2. Core skills for learning, life and work
3. Health and wellbeing
4. Your voice
5. The learner Offer
6. Improve how we work as a partnership

The partnership, comprised of various partners who's organisations are involved either directly, or indirectly with CLD, recognise the importance of ensuring the partnership works together, sharing expertise, manpower and resources to reduce inequalities and support those who need it the most.

The partnership work through various actions associated with each of the themes, with some specific areas requiring additional work by work stream groups. One such group is responsible for Digital.

## **4.0 Detail**

### **4.1 Digital Work Stream Group**

Digital skills is one of 6 key themes within the strategic partnership plan. Extensive feedback from a number of consultations highlights that learners and communities require further support to access digital devices as well as be supported to utilise devices and further develop skills as part of covid recovery. As a result a multi - agency digital skills workstream group has been established to identify need, develop and deliver actions and monitor and evaluate these under the digital skills workstream within the CLD Partnership Plan.

Role of the Group:

- Identifying the priority actions for CLD Partners to deliver under the digital skills theme of the CLD Strategic Plan.
- To be responsible for the development implementation, monitoring and reporting of the digital skills theme actions within the Argyll and Bute CLD Plan. This will include the appropriate risk management and mitigations, identification and sourcing of manpower and resources.
- To ensure strategic digital skills actions are aligned to wider relevant plans within Argyll and Bute including the Argyll and Bute Education Technology Strategy Group (ETSG) to enable collaboration and to avoid duplication.
- To identify, gather, share and analyse data to identify needs to inform planning, delivery and improvement.
- To foster collaboration and where possible share resources across partners as well as consider any further external funding required to deliver key priorities.
- To take into account changing learner needs and ensure a culture of self-evaluation and improvement.
- To liaise with council IT and wider partners to inform targeted communities and raise awareness of improvements made with superfast broadband access.
- To promote safe, legal, ethical and sustainable use of the internet/devices and raise awareness of cybersecurity best practices (e.g. password management, personal information and phishing scams etc).
- To communicate the work of the digital workstream to key partners, raise the profile of the work of the partnership and share and celebrate key successes.
- Identify and share examples of good practice

- To contribute to Education Scotland CLD inspections and other appropriate CLD quality assurance measures.

## 4.2 Mapping Exercise – Essential Digital Skills for Life and Work

Utilising Community based Adult Learning (CBAL) funding, an external consultancy agency was procured to undertake the task of reviewing the existing activity and completing an assessment of need to support the delivery of Essential Digital Skills (EDS) across Argyll and Bute. The CLD Partnership needed to know what Essential Digital Skills support exists and what is needed across Argyll and Bute. The focus of this review was on Digital Skills for Life and Work. These skills are essential to progress towards employment and manage day to day responsibilities. The following table shows the areas investigated, what existing assets are, and what potentially could be developed.

Access to devices	Existing assets	Build on assets or add support
Access to devices	Available through libraries, Job Centres (employability only) community centres, friends and family	Establish flexible support Fund to buy and distribute suitable devices. Have a digi-bank (like a foodbank but where devices can be distributed to referred people)
Access to connectivity	Space and facilities are available in Libraries, friends and family, public places	Provide mobile WiFi with 24 months unlimited data. Make more public spaces or schools more available at specific times. Inclusion of Essential Digital Skills support into the TSI directory under digital support services. ( <a href="https://abcd.scot/">https://abcd.scot/</a> )
Gaining and developing digital skills	Deliver support groups, friends and family, libraries and community centres	Build skills and capacity of those in organisations including those who are in remote areas. Have peripatetic workers/volunteers to conduct initial training in remote or island communities. Use EDS check-up, guides and tools available through SCVO
Confidence and understanding (relevance)	Support groups, libraries, friends and family	Stimulate peer to peer support and mentoring groups using young people undertaking social action. Digital Champions and promote a helpline

Access to online support and services	Support groups, friends and families, libraries, community groups, support workers	Digital Champions and support/IT helpline Advice on how to be a digital champion is available through Connecting Scotland website. <a href="https://connecting.scot/digital-champions">https://connecting.scot/digital-champions</a>
Disabilities (Visually impaired, Dyslexia, ADHD etc,)	Community groups, support workers	Digital Champions and helpline specific to their needs Disability specific devices
Prefer training and support in Gaelic or another language (incl. refugee support)	Community groups, support workers	Translated training programmes and guides Digital Champions and helpline specific to their needs

A Theory of Change outlining the links from activities through short term outcomes to medium- and long-term outcomes is included in the main report. In summary the resources suggested by the consultancy work are:

- Inclusion of Essential Digital Skills support into the TSI directory (<https://abcd.scot/>) under digital support services.
- A flexible fund to buy devices and pre-loaded SIMs
- More broadband access within community and public spaces
- Facilities to use devices and get support
- Peripatetic trainers who can visit remote communities
- Diagnostic to identify skill needs (Use SCVO framework)
- Volunteer digital inclusion mentors
- Translated training programmes (Gaelic, refugee languages)
- Drop-in digital clubs (linked to other sessions such as lunch clubs etc)

At the May 2023 CLD Strategic Partnership meeting, it was agreed that the Digital Workstream Group would review the recommendations from the consultant's report and report back to wider CLD partnership at the meeting in August 2023.

#### **4.3 Pilot Project – Databank application for free Wifi Access for Learners**

Pilot in Helensburgh - Up to five learners per month to receive through Community Learning live Argyll free data for Wi-Fi access to the internet to undertake community learning.

This project helps to close the Poverty attainment Gap and allows free access to marginalised and disadvantaged People across the areas as there is no cost to them. This will help them to keep in-touch with family, make payments online, shop online, search for work learn new skills digitally and in general keep in-touch with communities.

This doesn't address the logistics of connectivity in terms of connections to areas of Argyll that have limited or no access due to Broadband speed or Providers but it is a start to address other areas of the challenges some people face.

## 5.0 Conclusions

1. The CLD partnership continues to work on supporting the most disadvantaged in our communities to access Digital Learning.
2. A work stream group is focusing on developing Digital inclusion
3. A mapping exercise has been undertaken, with results to be reviewed and prioritised.

## 6.0 Implications

Strategic Implications	The Digital Inclusion work will tie into current ABOIP Outcomes 3 and 5.
Consultations, Previous considerations	Consultation for initial CLD themes was undertake in 2021, prior to the publishing of the plan. The Hall & Aitken Consultancy in 2022 included partner organisations, learners, third sector organisations and internal staff.
Resources	All partners in the CLD Strategic Group have existing resources able to support the development of Digital Inclusion.
Prevention	
Equalities	The CLD Digital Workstream group will work to remove barriers to Digital Inclusion and Digital Skills.
Climate Change	

For more information, please contact:

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## Links

**Argyll and Bute Community Learning and Development Plan 2021 – 2024**

<https://liveargyll.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/CLD-Strategic-Partnership-Plan-2021-2024-Digital-1.pdf>

## **Community Learning and Development in Argyll and Bute Council 11/01/22 Inspection Report**

<https://education.gov.scot/media/i4ubnpiu/cldargyllandbutecouncil110122.pdf>



Hall & Aitken -  
Digital Mapping Re

## **Appendices**