
Population Growth and In-Migration

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the CPP considers identifying target areas where population change is a concern and focus on these as common priority areas for action
- 1.2 That the CPP considers an approach similar to DriveSafe to publicly commit to a common approach to tackle the challenge of population change
- 1.3

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Previous discussions on population and migration have focused on: the enormous challenges posed by demographic change to the social fabric and economy of Argyll and Bute; in-migration by economic migrants, principally from eastern Europe who tend to stay for relatively short periods in relatively low paid jobs in the tourism and agricultural sectors; and longer term migrants who may be short-term migrants who settle, retirees or people moving to more permanent jobs (either as employees or to run their own business).
- 2.2 Other areas have developed information for eastern European migrants, which whilst presenting a welcoming image, does not necessarily lead to longer term changes in the population profile. Many of these migrants will have been recruited by agents or directly by employers and the part played by this information in promoting an area as a preferred destination is unclear.
- 2.3 This information certainly has a part to play in helping people to feel welcome and to access services. Argyll and Bute does not have a joint approach to presenting this type of information and the loss, if any, to the local economy is unclear (major urban centres, like Inverness, may always play a larger role)
- 2.4 Local discussions have not been a spur for action to collectively target population change as a priority. There needs to be a route to open up this topic and identify actions to boost the population, especially in the younger age cohorts where Argyll and Bute is under represented.

3. POSSIBLE APPROACH FOR ARGYLL AND BUTE

- 3.1 Argyll and Bute is difficult to promote as a single entity and issues of population have similar problems. There are areas of growth where changes in population profile or overall numbers are not a concern and other areas where population change is more serious.
- 3.2 CPP partners need to address these concerns in a coordinated manner with action focused on specific areas of need to reverse unwelcome population trends. There are several new sources of information that could help partners to target their resources to support action to promote in-migration. These are not yet agreed/approved, but once agreed can act as 'filters' to help identify common areas for action. These include:
- the Argyll and Bute Local Plan – that identifies key issues and areas identified for future development
 - the development and prioritisation of outline business cases for each of the waterfronts in Argyll and Bute (collectively known as CHORD)
 - the HIE operating plan which includes an updated map of fragile areas and areas of "employment deficit"
- 3.3 Other information will be held by other partners that can also help to focus attention on particular areas.
- 3.4 The CPP can then use these documents to prioritise and focus on specific areas within Argyll and Bute to create conditions for population growth as follows:
- formal agreement of partners to identify and develop the key services with the potential to influence in-migration, and retain population e.g. education, health, procurement policies which encourage employment and training in Argyll and Bute
 - coordinated activity to ensure better welcome of migrant workers to influence length of stay (either by service providers or indirectly by encouraging communities to be more proactive)
- 3.5 A coordinated approach could be progressed under a joint approach similar to DriveSafe with high profile agreement/launch of the areas to be targeted and a commitment to promote services that encourage in-migration/settlement in those areas.

Note prepared by Brian Barker following meeting of Lucinda Gray, Andrew Campbell and Brian Barker (apologies tendered by Jane Fowler).

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