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A Message from the Chair...

Welcome to the SLAED July 2022 Newsletter.

The first quarter of this financial year, 2022–23, has been an exceptionally busy period for all local authorities across Scotland. In addition to ongoing service delivery, with a key focus on addressing economic and social recovery from the pandemic, the cost of living crisis and the impacts of EU Exit, local authorities are responding to the investment funding opportunities through the UK Government’s Levelling Up agenda. In particular, this includes the development and preparation of Levelling Up Fund second round competitive bids and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plans, 2022–25, based on predetermined local authority UKSPF allocations; both within extremely tight timescales.

As we’re now entering the summer holiday period, I hope colleagues across all 32 local authorities have an opportunity to have a well-earned break.

– Ishabel Bremner, SLAED Chair



Arrol Gibb Innovation Campus Aims to Transform Large-scale Manufacturing

A global centre of excellence aiming to transform large-scale manufacturing through innovation and skills development has been launched in Fife. Based at [Babcock International's Rosyth facility](#), the Arrol Gibb Innovation Campus (AGIC) will serve a range of small to medium-sized enterprises in the marine, nuclear and energy-transition sectors, offering access to the latest industrial techniques and technology, industrial and office space, innovation advice and skills development.

AGIC is a collaboration between [Babcock International](#), [The University of Edinburgh](#), [University of Strathclyde](#), [Fife College](#), [Fife Council](#), [Scottish Enterprise](#) and [Skills Development Scotland](#). The partners are developing leading expertise in five core capabilities on one site: large-scale advanced manufacturing, composites, robotics, nuclear manufacturing, and digital shipbuilding. These five are supported by cross-campus skills development and an Innovation Incubator for start-up businesses and existing businesses looking to engage in innovative product and process improvements.

A key element of AGIC's offering is skills development, for clients, as a standalone service for businesses, and for apprentices and students in schools, colleges and universities. AGIC will offer access to real-life datasets and state-of-the-art equipment, including the latest digital and data tools, plus world-leading academic research and the latest shop-floor developments.

New Jobs and New Opportunities as Levenmouth Business Park Gets Funding Boost

New modern and attractive business units, which will create and sustain jobs in the Levenmouth area, have moved a step closer – courtesy of funding from the Levenmouth Reconnected Programme (LRP). Almost £715,000 has been allocated from the LRP's £10 million fund to bolster what's available at Levenmouth Business Park, with seven new employment units – comprising an incredible 753m² of business space – being developed in a prime location.



Around 25 jobs are expected to be created as a direct result of the new units, while construction itself is estimated to create at least 26 additional jobs. Councillor Craik, Spokesperson for Finance, Economy and Strategic Planning, said:

"The award of funding from Levenmouth Reconnected is welcomed and Fife Council's Economic Development Team looks forward to supporting further investment and economic benefits as the rail project progresses."

Located less than a mile from the proposed Cameron Bridge rail station, the new Business Park also provides opportunity

serve to encourage higher patronage at that location by modes such as foot, wheeling, cycle, or bus.



£105 gift cards for around 85,000 Glasgow households to be issued

Glasgow City Council has approved the distribution of Covid Low-Income Gift Cards worth £105 to around 85,000 low-income households in the city. These cards can be used in registered businesses in Glasgow, with more than 700 businesses of all sizes registered across the city so far, and almost 400 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the process of registering.

The council was given £9.456million by the Scottish Government for this project - from the Scotland Loves Local campaign - with this funding coming from the Scottish Government's £80million Covid Recovery Fund. The Scotland Loves Local campaign looks to encourage people in Scotland to think local first and support businesses on their local high streets.

Councillor Susan Aitken, Leader of Glasgow City Council, said: "The gift cards will give city businesses a much-needed lift following two years of the pandemic and the resulting impact on trade. But they also allow us to support tens of thousands of low-income households and individuals with practical assistance, something we hope can make a positive difference to them during the worst cost-of-living crisis in decades."

UK's Premier Facility is a Reality in Ayr

A state-of-the-art Extended Reality (XR) facility, regarded as the leading XR showcase in the UK, has been officially opened by Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise, Ivan McKee MSP in Ayr. The Aerospace Digital Visualisation Suite (ADVS) gives small or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) free access to the very latest XR and digital visualisation technologies to help them grow their business in the aerospace and space sector. The ADVS facility was established following a successful bid to the Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund, led by South Ayrshire Council and its partners.

Offering an unrivalled suite of technology and equipment, the ADVS enables engineering companies to innovate, develop skills and improve their productivity. Ivan McKee MSP commented: "Through the ADVS, South Ayrshire will play a key role in supporting high growth Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs), along with development of the sector, which are critical to achieving our National Strategy for Economic Transformation ambitions."

Councillor Martin Dowe, Leader of South Ayrshire Council said: "South Ayrshire is home to Scotland's largest aerospace hub at Prestwick, which is receiving a great deal of interest due to the £80 million investment from the Ayrshire Growth Deal to establish new



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cutting-edge technology to improve their productivity and competitiveness.”

For more information on the ADVS, including details on how to get involved with the project, visit www.am-aerospace.co.uk/advs.



North East Scotland Green Freeport – Delivering the Net Zero Capital of Europe

On June 20th, the North East Scotland Green Freeport (NESGF) consortium submitted its formal bid for Green Freeport status. A freeport is a special economic zone surrounding an air, rail or sea port or collection of ports that offers tax breaks and lower business tariffs. This helps to stimulate the local economy and create inclusive, prosperous communities.

NESGF encompasses Aberdeen City and Peterhead and aims to deliver growth and regeneration in the North East of Scotland and transform the region into a global leader of sustainable energy and innovation.

Up to 32,000 high-quality jobs will be created under NESGF’s ground-breaking plans to transform the region into the 'Net Zero Capital of Europe'. If the bid is successful, NESGF will secure vital trade and support the acceleration of innovation, diversification and decarbonisation of the region's key sectors and deliver a £8.5 billion GVA boost, ushering in a new era of investment, innovation, regional regeneration and opportunities for those that need them most.

NESGF is a collaborative consortium formed by Port of Aberdeen, Aberdeen International Airport, Peterhead Port Authority, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council joining forces with industry and academia to drive forward a successful bid.

For further information, visit: <http://www.northeastscotlandgreenfreeport.co.uk>

Police Scotland Sign the Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter

Police Scotland (Ayrshire Division) have become the latest public body to sign up to the Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter. A bold economic model, North Ayrshire Council is the first Community Wealth Building (CWB) Council in Scotland and its aim is to create a more diverse business base for Ayrshire while ensuring wealth is locally owned.

Police Scotland are just one of many public institutions who have pledged their commitment to support the principles of Community Wealth Building and will join these in supporting, collaborating and further embedding Community Wealth Building across Ayrshire. A landmark achievement in partnership working, it is hoped that more national organisations and public bodies will come on board over the



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Councillor Marie Burns, North Ayrshire Council Leader and Chair of the CWB Commission commented: "I would like to extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to Police Scotland for pledging their support to the Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter... Police Scotland will work with us to use their economic levers so that we can generate more employment opportunities and build a strong local economy which supports fair work and encourages local spend across the region."

Links to Further Information:

[Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter](#)

[North Ayrshire Council Community Wealth Building](#)



Creativity and Flexibility Bring Opportunity from Adversity

Businesses suffered terribly during the pandemic, but one company managed to not only survive, but find an opportunity. Mage Control Systems designs custom control systems that are embedded in the devices they operate. Operations Director Janet Menzies said: "Mage trains world-class engineers to achieve ground-breaking innovation, plus our focus on training and job progression and maintaining consideration for employees and their families meant we could adapt and our employees were happy to work with us... We are indebted to the Business Support Team at South Lanarkshire Council who have been invaluable in providing advice and guidance and assisting with part-funding."

The opportunity that emerged from the pandemic is a perfect example of this synergy between company ethos and workforce relations. Councillor Robert Brown, Chair of the council's Community and Enterprise Resources Committee, said: "There are huge opportunities for South Lanarkshire businesses in the new post-Covid world – and Mage are an illustration of how our Business Support Team can help any type of company."

Information on assistance from South Lanarkshire Council's Business Support Team or their wide range of services is on the [Support for business](#) pages on the council website.

Partners Enjoy Renfrewshire LEP's First Face to Face Employability Conference in Three Years

Several Tay This year's event focused on the need to re-connect local employability services with communities and organisations across Renfrewshire as well as build new connections, recognising the need to promote the benefits of

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conference began with presentations from LEP members on the current economic and wider context; the new Renfrewshire Delivery Plan ; the employability contribution to tackling child poverty and key local challenges and opportunities. This was followed by workshops exploring the barriers to engagement, and collaborative approaches to ensure the LEP/NOLB/Child Poverty target groups are aware of the support available and are encouraged and supported to get involved.



Feedback was very positive and the ideas and actions identified were wide ranging. Lots to keep the LEP and stakeholders busy!

The conference report is available here - <https://investinrenfrewshire.com/rlep-news/>



Dedicated Support for Midlothian Employers, Tourism Businesses and Local Communities

Midlothian Council's Economic Development team are hosting regular virtual events aimed at employers, community groups and the tourism sector across the County. Events focus on supporting employment challenges, encouraging collaboration and partnerships between Midlothian's tourism businesses and influencing the setting up of Social Enterprises in communities to tackle current challenges.

Midlothian Employer Surgeries

The Business Gateway Midlothian team facilitates these surgeries, connecting businesses with Economic Development, Skills Development Scotland, Department of Work & Pensions, Midlothian's Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability team and Capital City Partnership. Businesses receive one-to-one support and advice, with Partners identifying which employability support package is most suited to current needs whilst providing long-term support.

MTF Member Roundtable Sessions

Exclusive to members of Midlothian Tourism Forum, this collaborative event connects businesses and offers access to dedicated support from Midlothian's Economic Development and Business Gateway teams. Sessions focus on challenges facing the sector from the business perspective, identifying creative solutions and opportunities to increase visitor numbers and benefit local tourism businesses.

Social Enterprise Conversation Sessions

With partner Midlothian Third Sector Interface, communities in Midlothian are brought together to make real change. Sessions are designed to be open forums for attendees to

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minute neighbourhoods. Groups are then supported to develop projects by Midlothian's Business Gateway service.

For further information, contact Jenny.corbett@midlothian.gov.uk.

Grow @ The Vinery

The Vinery is a brand-new community space in the coastal town of Banff, Aberdeenshire, which has been restored and regenerated with help from the Scottish Government, Aberdeenshire Council and the lead provider chosen as local charity Aberdeen Foyer. Its main aim is to alleviate the impact of poverty and provide support to individuals by working alongside them to move towards and sustain employment. Therapeutic sessions are provided, which utilise the fantastic indoor and outdoor space, to help people improve their health and wellbeing through mindfulness, exercise, training, and accredited learning.



Targeting the long-term unemployed to deliver the vinery objectives has been a key recruitment strategy. The team have been working with the council & Job Centres and five people have already been recruited to the Long Term Unemployment scheme, with three more identified to join. Roles include a chef, gardener, community engagement officer, general assistant, and digital and media assistant.

Clare Bancroft - Project Lead for The Vinery said: "It's fantastic to see everything coming together and the hard work of The Foyer, Aberdeenshire council and our community groups finally realised. We're also so proud our new team members who have put a huge amount of effort into training for their new roles."

For further information on the Vinery please contact clare.bancroft@aberdeenfoyer.com



Space Experts Unite to Celebrate Ayrshire Cluster Opportunities

A sold-out conference saw a number of Scotland's space industry experts present the benefits of the burgeoning space cluster in Prestwick to an audience of more than 110 delegates. The *Beyond Launch* event showcased the opportunities that adding space supply chain activity to an already established aerospace cluster will bring to Ayrshire and the local economy, including the creation of thousands of new jobs.

Programme Director of Prestwick Spaceport, Mick O'Connor, said: "The development of the space cluster at Prestwick with the Spaceport as the flagship further advances the UK's space industry, which is now one of the country's fastest growing

together supply chain partners from across Scotland to share their knowledge of the space industry and alerting them to potential business opportunities.”

The Prestwick Spaceport project has gained significant multi-million pound funding through the Ayrshire Growth Deal as part of the highly ambitious programme to create an unrivalled space supply-chain network, boosted by a location easily reached by road, rail, sea and air – and accessible to a vast talent pool.

For more information on Prestwick Aerospace visit: <http://www.prestwickaerospace.com/>

Tay Country Launches Dedicated Online Resource For Travel Trade

Scotland’s Tay Country, comprising Angus, Dundee, Fife and Perthshire, have created a dedicated travel trade channel with new itineraries, content and images to assist the travel trade wishing to develop programmes and itineraries in the region. There are four new itineraries targeting different potential visitor groups which weave together themes of golf, cultural exploration, food and drink, adventurous activities, relaxation and new experiences. All trips include businesses which are ready to partner with tour operators, DMCs and travel agents wanting to develop programmes in Scotland.



Tay Country aims to increase overall visitor spend into the region to £550 million by 2024. While the region’s businesses engage actively with inbound tour operators, this need for growth and development warranted the creation of further sales assets to enable better support for the travel trade. Born out of the Tay Cities Growth deal, which brought together the four areas, Scottish Enterprise and VisitScotland, Scotland’s Tay Country epitomises the Scottish Government’s focus on regional partnerships and collaborations. To succeed in its regional growth targets, the return of international visitors and the involvement of the travel trade play a key role.

The dedicated Travel Trade web content can be found at www.taycountry.uk/travel-trade.

North Ayrshire Community Benefits Wish List

Since launching in October 2021, North Ayrshire Council’s Community Benefits Wish List has successfully matched over 20 Council contractors (and counting!) with local groups looking for support.

Developed in partnership with the local Third Sector Interface, the initiative has seen local community and Third Sector

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community benefit agreement with Ayrshire business Fergusons Bakery (a Scotland Excel contractor) has enabled the food larder network to offer their members freshly baked rolls twice a week, greatly improving the dignity and quality of their affordable food offer. The process has also enabled groups access support for more complex projects, such as new paving in community gardens; on two occasions two contractors have co-delivered support, with one donating slabs and the other donating staff time.

Groups looking for support can register up to three 'wishes' on the publicly accessible list, and Council contractors then review the needs and identify those they are best placed to support. The Wish List supports the Council's Community Wealth Building agenda by increasing the value of procurement within North Ayrshire, and makes community benefits accessible and visible to the grassroots organisations who are creating change in their communities.

YouTube: [A helping hand for North Ayrshire community groups | The Community Benefits Wish List - YouTube](#)

Moray Pathways Employability Support and Training Hub – 1 year celebration of achievements

The Moray Pathways local employability partnership are celebrating 1 year since the Moray Pathways Employability and Training hub was opened in June 2021. The hub was initially set up to target young people who have been hardest hit by the pandemic to access the support and opportunities they need. Funding from DWP and the local employability partnership was secured to employ a core team of staff from Moray Council Employability Team. The team involves a DWP Youth Work Coach who provides benefit advice and support, a project officer to co-ordinate the project and a project officer (digital inclusion) to provide vital digital support and develop digital skills.



The project quickly expanded to support people of all ages, with an increased number of partners using the hub to meet with clients and deliver training and employability support. Kailie Walsh, Hub Project Officer from Moray Council, is proud of what the hub has become. "Despite lockdowns, restrictions and challenges along the way, nearly 500 people from across Moray have used a variety of hub provisions to improve their employability in the widest sense – A range of partners have delivered over 200 sessions, from large employer recruitment days to 1:1 sessions, and marketplaces showcasing the variety of support partners can offer, whether that be learning/training, digital, wellbeing or financial."

Youtube: <https://youtu.be/63HGbT7Lg0o>

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