

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	City Growth and Resources
DATE	19 June
REPORT TITLE	Neighbourhood Audits of Regeneration Areas
REPORT NUMBER	PLA/18/034
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Richard Sweetnam
REPORT AUTHOR	Angela Taylor
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.2 determine the Council's strategies for city growth and place planning except in relation to major infrastructural planning; and 2.3 consider reports on key actions by the Council towards the delivery of the Regional Strategy and the Inward Investment Plan.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Committee of the findings of five neighbourhood audits carried out in the regeneration areas of Middlefield, Woodside, Tillydrone, Torry and Seaton, on behalf of Aberdeen City Council, as part of the Progress Through Positive Partnerships project, and to approve proposed actions to address points raised in those reports.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the content of the five neighbourhood audit reports and overall report;
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer, City Growth, and the Chief Officer, Digital and Technology, (working with the Council's Digital Partner) to develop and implement an app which can be used by Council employees, partner agencies, and members of the public to access information about support services available to them;
- 2.3 Instructs the Chief Officer, City Growth, to work with partner organisations to investigate the feasibility of running regular neighbourhood career and support sessions in the regeneration areas; and

2.4 Instructs the Chief Officer, City Growth, and the Internal and External Communications Manager to work with partner agencies to develop and deliver a marketing strategy to promote the availability of training and support services across the city.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Aberdeen City Council secured European Structural Fund (ESF) monies to deliver the Progress Through Positive Partnerships employability project, which was approved by the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee in August 2016. As part of this project, a series of neighbourhood audits designed to identify the needs of local people in the regeneration areas of Middlefield, Woodside, Tillydrone, Torry and Seaton, was carried out.

3.2 Pathways Services was commissioned, following a competitive tendering exercise, to carry out the audits and identify what services local people wanted, key barriers to improving their lifestyles, individual aspirations, and future service provision requirements, with the aim of identifying what services were required. The exercise also sought to identify what services the area residents were aware of locally and whether new and existing services could be better targeted.

3.3 The surveys were carried out over the summer and early-autumn, when the canvassers went door-to-door across the regeneration areas, as well as attending community events and having a presence at community facilities, including rent offices.

3.4 The aim was to get 200 survey responses in each area, but unfortunately, despite repeated attempts to engage with residents, the canvassers were unsuccessful, to varying degrees in different areas, in achieving this number. A number of those spoken to expressed an interest in receiving support via the project and have been invited to register. Leaflets and calling cards were left at homes where there was no response and ongoing efforts to engage with those who did not take up the offer of assistance at the time of the survey will be made via the marketing campaign.

3.5 Each of the area reports, attached as appendices to this report identifies themes and issues raised in each area. A number of common themes runs throughout, and this is highlighted in the overall report - Skills Audit Report on Regeneration Areas in Aberdeen City. As a result, the same recommendations are put forward for addressing the issues in each area.

3.6 The main issues identified were:

- Lack of understanding and knowledge of eligibility for in-work benefits;
- Need for greater promotion of available support and benefits;
- Need for partner organisations to link up and have a presence in the localities to increase knowledge of and access to services;
- Need for affordable, accessible childcare in neighbourhoods;
- Requirement for more training, and particularly more locally-available training in the city and neighbourhoods;

- Need for more work trials, coaching, and key-worker support and services to address barriers to employment for those seeking to enter or return to the workforce;
 - Many people seeking to enter the workforce are looking for less than the average Aberdeen weekly wage, reflecting a tendency towards seeking lower and semi-skilled jobs and the need to ensure that there are opportunities to progress and secure more skilled employment either immediately or at a later stage.
 - Much of the help sought is available, but people don't know how to access it.
- 3.7 As can be seen from the appendices, the recommendations centre largely around awareness-raising of support and benefits available and encourage significant promotional activity through a range of means to connect people to that support. The development of an app, which could be simply and regularly updated and easily accessed by council staff, support and partner agencies, service providers, and the public would be a significant step towards the provision of a virtual one-stop shop and help to signpost people towards support.
- 3.8 The Progress Through Positive Partnerships project is due to run until December 2018, however options to extend it for up to four more years utilising remaining ESF resources and for the associated additional match funding are being explored meantime.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The delivery of improved signposting and access to support services could lead to a reduction in costs to the Council through a reduced reliance on benefits, such as housing and council tax benefits through supporting people into paid employment, as well as through a potential reduction in court and recovery costs associated with the termination of tenancies as a result of housing rent arrears. This is a potential positive outcome and could be achieved through pointing people towards organisations such as the Council's Financial Inclusion Team, Cash In Your Pocket, and Shelter, which support people who are in financial difficulty to address those difficulties with a view to preserving tenancies and avoiding debt-related recovery actions.
- 4.2 There is also the potential for efficiencies through saving staff and partner time in identifying and finding contact details for support organisations, and through individuals being able to identify them themselves rather than relying on the council to do so.
- 4.3 The costs of any joint marketing campaign would be met from the Progress Through Positive Partnerships budget and partner contributions. Although not formally costed, it is anticipated that the app development costs would be less than £10,000, which could be met from the project budget though contributions would be sought from other partner sources. Due process would be followed in terms of procurement regulations.
- 4.4 The costs of regular neighbourhood career and support sessions in the regeneration areas would be met through the project budget and delivered by

the project using contracted organisations, in partnership with employability training providers, such as Pathways Services, and with the potential for Job Centre Plus and Skills Development Scotland to take a role in this. Services would also be delivered by businesses requested to do so as part of their Community Benefit clause obligations.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Customer	The recommendations made in the Neighbourhood Audit reports bring forward new ways to engage with and support customers on their doorsteps and digitally. These will not be realised if the recommendations are not pursued. The potential benefits of making people more aware of the support they are entitled to may not be realised without awareness raising campaigns and a presence in communities.	L	A Progress Through Positive Partnerships communications plan has been drafted to support the work of the project and will be updated to find new ways of spreading information about services available to the public.
Reputational	Failure to act on the findings and recommendations of the reports may carry some reputational risk to Aberdeen City Council, as it may be seen to be aware of the difficulties facing people, but doing little to support them back into work. This	M	A Progress Through Positive Partnerships communications plan has been drafted to support the work of the project and will be updated to find new ways of spreading information about services available to the public.

	could damage some of the positive work done and relationships built via the development of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Community Planning Partnership, as well as among residents in the communities and via the media.		
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7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	<p>Inclusive Economic Growth - We will ensure there is access for all employers to qualified labour. We will significantly improve the city through regeneration of our communities and ensuring a vibrant economy.</p> <p>By providing improved access to support services, training and job seeking skills, people living in our communities will be in a stronger position to find and sustain employment, improving their lifestyles and reducing reliance on the state.</p>
Enabling Technology	<p>Digital Innovation – Aberdeen City is the location of choice for businesses to develop in digital innovation, supported by academic and public sector activity.</p> <p>The development of an app to support council and other public sector staff, support agencies, service providers and the public would improve knowledge of services available and accessibility to them, while also signposting people to the help and agencies available in their local areas, as well as in the city as a whole.</p>

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Partnerships and Alliances	<p>Closer working with partners and the strengthening of existing relationships would support the further development of a strategic employability pipeline in Aberdeen, while encouraging cross-referrals resulting in greater support for those citizens in need of it and reducing duplication of effort.</p>

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	The recommendations arising from this report do not require that a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment is completed.
Privacy Impact Assessment	Not required
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	This report meets the Fairer Scotland Duty.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Report CHI/16/154 European Social Fund – Employability Pipeline CH&I Committee report August 2016

10. APPENDICES (if applicable)

1. Skills Audit Report on Regeneration Areas in Aberdeen City
2. Middlefield Neighbourhood Audit
3. Woodside Neighbourhood Audit
4. Tillydrone Neighbourhood Audit
5. Torry Neighbourhood Audit
6. Seaton Neighbourhood Audit
7. Report CHI/16/154 European Social Fund – Employability Pipeline

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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