

PROGRESS REPORT TO EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT GROUP

Reporting Period: January to April 2021

Sector-Based Support Group: Digital Work stream Oversight Group

Group Lead: Johnny Mone

Group Objective

Support the economic recovery and renewal of the above sector, with Community Wealth Building at the heart, in response to the profound and unprecedented impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on the economy.

Guidelines

Milestone RAG Status

Milestone completed

On target

Minor delays up to one month

Delays greater than one month

Key Milestones/Deliverables (e.g. establish group membership, communications plan agreed & by whom, strategic resources plan agreed & by whom)

Due Date

RAG Status

Group Lead Appointed

Jan

Terms of reference redrafted and agreed

Feb

Group membership reconstituted

May

Support resource appointed

April

Business case for projects revised

August

Industry leadership consulted

July

Key Actions - update on activity:

1. Since the last reporting period, what development has taken place in terms of a recovery and renewal plan for the above sector?

Additional resource has been recruited to support the work stream and will become effective from 26 April. Further discussion have taken place with SFT and other partners to explore options for edge datacentres as to the model for exploitation of enhanced connectivity

2. Since the last reporting period, what quantitative and qualitative information has the group identified, collated & interpreted with regard to the impact of Covid-19 on the sector?

This digital work stream straddles all the work all other work streams and it is crucial that good insight is developed between the leads. Meeting with other worstream oversight group leads to establish the mode of collaboration among the worstream oversight groups has taken place and continues to build collaborative work.

3. Since the last reporting period, what support has been provided to the sector in terms of a response to the pandemic?

N/A

<p>4. Since the last reporting period, what actions have been identified and/or implemented to support recovery and renewal within the sector, including financial implications of measures proposed?</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>5. Since the last reporting period, what collaborative work has taken place with the other sector-based recovery and renewal groups to ensure a joined-up approach?</p> <p>Working with EKOS who are providing a feasibility study to locate a 5G Innovation hub at the HALO project. Collaboration designed to ensure that whatever is recommended ties in with the goals of the Digital workstream</p> <p>Initial discussions commenced around the opportunities and linkages with i3 investments</p>
<p>6. What engagement has taken place since the last reporting period with local businesses and the wider community, and what support has been realised from this?</p> <p>This is planned running up to July to ensure that the Business Plan revision reflects the needs of regional industry – especially those who feed into the other workstreams</p>
<p>7. Since the last reporting period, what work has been identified or undertaken that has linkage with / impact on the Ayrshire Growth Deal?</p> <p>See above</p>
<p>8. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on climate change?</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>9. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on skills and training within the sector?</p> <p>Business plan revision will address the skills project requirements in the light of industry engagement</p>
<p>10. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on digital infrastructure within the sector?</p> <p>The workstream is fundamentally about leveraging economic value for the region for enhanced connectivity this will entail the location of a hub and spoke datacentre model which will be a significant part of the digital infrastructure needed.</p>
<p>11. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on business support for the sector?</p> <p>N/A</p>

12.What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has linkage with / impact on Community Wealth Building?
N/A

What issues have been identified since the last reporting period?	What mitigating actions have been taken/considered to overcome these issues?
Lack of capacity	This is being addressed with the appointment of a new resource starting on April 26th

What actions/support/resources/decisions are required by the Executive Oversight Group or the Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board?
Clarity is being sought on the remit of the workstream oversight groups and how they function relative to the executive oversight group.

PROGRESS REPORT TO EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT GROUP

Reporting Period:	Sector-Based Support Group: Skills
To end March 2021	Group Lead: Skills Development Scotland

Group Objective	Guidelines	Milestone RAG Status
Support the economic recovery and renewal of the above sector, with Community Wealth Building at the heart, in response to the profound and unprecedented impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on the economy.	Milestone completed	
	On target	
	Minor delays up to one month	
	Delays greater than one month	

Key Milestones/Deliverables (e.g. establish group membership, communications plan agreed & by whom, strategic resources plan agreed & by whom)	Due Date	RAG Status
Set up of REP Skills Workstream (SDS, Ayrshire College and UWS)	July 2020	
Draft and present evidence paper to the REP setting out impact of COVID-19 on the region	September 2020	
Skills Workshop to Understand the Impact of COVID on the labour market and skills in Ayrshire and Identify the Steps needed for recovery and renewal	November 2021	
Expansion of membership of Skills Workstream to wider regional partners	January 2021	
Work to support the AGD lead to develop 'skills pathways' for AGD projects	From January 2021	
Develop and agree scope for Ayrshire Regional Skills Investment Plan	April 2021	
Commissioning of Regional Skills Investment Plan	May 2021	
Development of Regional Skills Investment Plan	December 2021	

Key Actions - update on activity:
<p>1. Since the last reporting period, what development has taken place in terms of a recovery and renewal plan for the above sector?</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Skills are a derived demand so the Skills Workstream will not drive recovery and renewal – but skills partners ready to respond to the demands identified by other workstream leads and partners to support recovery and renewal.</p>

2. Since the last reporting period, what quantitative and qualitative information has the group identified, collated & interpreted with regard to the impact of Covid-19 on the sector?

Quantitative

COVID-19 Labour market intelligence is produced on a monthly basis at national level.

Most recent publication March 2021 <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/skills-planning-alignment/covid-19-labour-market-insights/>

COVID-19 Labour market intelligence is produced on a monthly basis at an Ayrshire level providing detail on a range of key indicators including the resilience of Ayrshire to COVID-19 Impacts, the impact of COVID-19 on business , redundancy, the impact of COVID-19 on employment, regional unemployment scenarios, current and future demand for skills and current job postings.

Most recent publication March 2021 <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/47092/rsa-infographic-ayrshire.pdf>

3. Since the last reporting period, what support has been provided to the sector in terms of a response to the pandemic?

N/A

4. Since the last reporting period, what actions have been identified and/or implemented to support recovery and renewal within the sector, including financial implications of measures proposed?

N/A

5. Since the last reporting period, what collaborative work has taken place with the other sector-based recovery and renewal groups to ensure a joined-up approach?

The workstream leads for the other sector workstreams are members of the Ayrshire Skills Group.

6. What engagement has taken place since the last reporting period with local businesses and the wider community, and what support has been realised from this?

The Ayrshire Chamber and the Third Sector are now members of the Ayrshire Skills Group.

7. Since the last reporting period, what work has been identified or undertaken that has linkage with / impact on the Ayrshire Growth Deal?

The Skills Pathway development work being led by the AGD PMO will be supported by the Ayrshire Skills Group. It has been proposed that the work to develop a Regional Skills Investment Plan (RSIP) will be able to incorporate the key elements of the developing AGD skills pathway work.

8. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on climate change?
N/A
<p>9. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on skills and training within the sector?</p> <p>An Ayrshire Skills Group meeting was held on the 10th March with a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role and remit of group; • The scoping of a Regional Skills Investment Plan (RSIP) • Progress on the development of Skills Pathways for the AGD <p>As agreed at the meeting, Andrea Glass, Head of Regional Skills Planning and Enabling Sectors at SDS, has pulled together a draft scoping paper on the Ayrshire Regional Skills Investment Plan (which will incorporate the key elements of the developing AGD skills pathway work). This was circulated to the members of the Ayrshire Skills Group on 1st April for feedback.</p> <p>The paper will be discussed at the next meeting (on 23rd April) and further refined, before being used as the basis of the Brief to be put out to tender for consultancy support for the development of the RSIP in May.</p>
10. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on digital infrastructure within the sector?
N/A
11. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on business support for the sector?
N/A
12. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has linkage with / impact on Community Wealth Building?
N/A

What issues have been identified since the last reporting period?	What mitigating actions have been taken/considered to overcome these issues?
Still need greater clarity on where the operational day to day responsibility lies for driving forward the implementation of the Regional Economic Strategy.	An SE hosted session with workstream leads was planned – but has not yet taken place due to illness. This (or some oversight of all workstreams) remains a critical need.

Successful RSIP Development and Implementation

To facilitate the successful development and implementation of an RSIP in Ayrshire there is a need for:

- Key skills partners to engage and commit to the process, which may require changes in behaviour and practice.
- Clarity in terms of governance and accountability for development, implementation and ongoing monitoring of the RSIP.
- It will be critical for partners to engage in further discussion around resources.

The collaborative process and co-design of the RSIP with partners will help to facilitate successful development and implementation.

What actions/support/resources/decisions are required by the Executive Oversight Group or the Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board?

Publication of the RSIP is not the outcome - implementation is critical with a strong role for the Ayrshire Skills Group, the Regional Economic Partnership and wider partners in terms of commitment and resource.

SDS has identified £40K budget to support this work. This will allow for the development of the RSIP and the articulation of the outline process for the development of Skills Pathways (with one round of initial consultation with project leads). If more in-depth work is required on Skills Pathways and/or if any elements of the work are to be expanded then additional partner financial contributions will be required.

Aside from this, resource to fund the actions required for the implementation of the RSIP will be needed. The identification of the agreed priority skills areas for action by the REP Ayrshire Skills Group will provide a clear steer for where investment is required. Alongside the resources that partners will be able to commit, realign etc. the Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund through the Ayrshire Growth Deal potentially offers a significant opportunity to support these ambitions.

PROGRESS REPORT TO EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT GROUP

Reporting Period:	Sector-Based Support Group: Food and Drink
	Group Lead: Alastair Dobson

Group Objective	Guidelines	Milestone RAG Status
Support the economic recovery and renewal of the above sector, with Community Wealth Building at the heart, in response to the profound and unprecedented impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on the economy.	Milestone completed	
	On target	
	Minor delays up to one month	
	Delays greater than one month	

Key Milestones/Deliverables (e.g. establish group membership, communications plan agreed & by whom, strategic resources plan agreed & by whom)	Due Date	RAG Status
Recovery & Renewal Action Plan produced, and regular progress reports provided to the Group	Jan 2021	
Establishment of a Communications Plan	June 2021	

Key Actions - update on activity:
<p>1. Since the last reporting period, what development has taken place in terms of a recovery and renewal plan for the above sector?</p> <p>An output-based recovery and renewal plan has been put in place, which is aligned to Scotland Food & Drink Partnership recovery plan themes, including supporting businesses and stimulating demand in key markets.</p> <p>Monthly updates on this plan, with a focus on all aspects of operational activity, are considered by the Group at our regular virtual team meetings.</p>
<p>2. Since the last reporting period, what quantitative and qualitative information has the group identified, collated & interpreted with regard to the impact of Covid-19 on the sector?</p> <p>Data produced by the Office for National Statistics in February 2020 demonstrated clearly the twin impacts of Covid-19 and Brexit on the food and drink sector in Scotland. In particular, it has demonstrated the huge decrease in export trade, particularly in the meat and dairy sectors. Fish and shellfish exports have fallen by 83% in the last year, whilst meat exports have reduced by 59%, and dairy products by 50%.</p>
<p>3. Since the last reporting period, what support has been provided to the sector in terms of a response to the pandemic?</p> <p>The pandemic is resulting in problems of social isolation for many primary producers, who no longer have access to auctions, farmers' markets, etc. Recognising this, 12 producers have been identified and will be asked to speak to fellow</p>

businesses for an hour each month. Peer to peer mentoring will be an important support to many of our struggling businesses in the current climate.

Companies have been able to take advantage of free support available from a range of organisations, including My Hospitality Partners, Productivity Club Scotland and the Chamber of Commerce. There has also been many discussions with Scotland Food and Drink, Food and Drink Federation and other critical partners to ensure the best possible advice and support is being delivered at business level.

Alignment with the work of the Visitor Economy work stream should embed food and drink and food tourism at the heart of a quality visitor experience in Ayrshire and deliver the first stages of community and business recovery.

Moving forward, the recruitment of Community Wealth Building Locality Officers is underway, and once in post, they will work on the ground with local companies from a range of sectors, including our own to look at developing supply chain opportunities.

4. Since the last reporting period, what actions have been identified and/or implemented to support recovery and renewal within the sector, including financial implications of measures proposed?

The Scottish Government has allocated discretionary funding to local authorities to allow them to use their knowledge of local economies to direct funding towards businesses experiencing financial challenges as a result of Covid-19. This process has now entered its second delivery phase, with many food and drink businesses facing hardship being the recipients of grant funding.

It is anticipated that separate funding will follow from the Scottish Government to support sector-specific recovery activity during 2021.

The Team works closely with businesses and have identified a number of areas where additional support is required. Consideration is being given to providing training in areas such as commerciality, packaging and manufacturing efficiencies.

5. Since the last reporting period, what collaborative work has taken place with the other sector-based recovery and renewal groups to ensure a joined-up approach?

Tourism: A new tourism strategic group for Ayrshire was launched during the quarter. A wide range of partners and stakeholders will be involved in this group, and it will be important to establish links with them to ensure consistency and prevent overlap or duplication.

The Team is providing support to the Coig, who are undertaking research into visitor management issues across Ayrshire and the Clyde islands. This important research will help to inform future plans for the development of tourism and hospitality infrastructure across Ayrshire.

Clean Growth: The group is developing working relationships with the Clean Growth work stream, as that group develops its own Recovery Plan. Our work in areas such as sustainable packaging will make an important contribution to this agenda.

The Food Tourism Co-ordinators have engaged with the Ayrshire Chamber to help facilitate the development of the Ayrshire Connect website which has the aim of encouraging collaboration between businesses and promote the region and those businesses and help facilitate community and business recovery from the pandemic.

6. What engagement has taken place since the last reporting period with local businesses and the wider community, and what support has been realised from this?

AMIC Project: a number of engagement sessions have taken place during the last quarter, including with the NFU, Food & Drink Forum (South of England), HIE and a number of businesses.

The last quarter also saw the delivery of the SAC Consulting report which sets out the findings of their workshops with Ayrshire businesses and food and drink sectoral representatives. The report found that a physical site based at AMIC would be a huge asset to micro/ start-up businesses and would provide a centre for knowledge, skills, equipment, and facilities that they may not be able to afford on their own.

Colleagues are taking forward the key recommendations from the report, particularly those that can be taken forward in the short term ahead of any development of a physical building.

Food Tourism: monthly newsletters have been issued by the Food Tourism Co-ordinators and a regional Facebook group has been set up to facilitate collaboration and support.

A supporters meeting was held for Arran and 45 businesses are now engaged with Arran's Food Journey. Ayrshire Food and a' that continues to hold monthly steering group meetings.

7. Since the last reporting period, what work has been identified or undertaken that has linkage with / impact on the Ayrshire Growth Deal?

The Team has been liaising with the AGD Skills Project to identify areas of commonality and ensure that overlap and duplication is eliminated.

AMIC is one of the keynote projects within the AGD, and our Virtual Team includes members of the AMIC project team, who are leading on the development of the Food and Drink Centre of Excellence.

All activity will consider and ensure linkages across all appropriate Ayrshire Growth Deal projects. An update on the AGD CWB project is provided at no. 12 below.

The AGD Food and Drink Lead and Ayrshire Food Tourism Co-ordinators have been working with the three unitary authorities to highlight and promote local procurement.

8. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on climate change?

Taste of Arran companies are adopting a simple process to set out a Net Zero plan on a page. This is currently at the testing stage, and a report on progress will be provided at the April meeting of our group. If the process is robust, simple and adds value to planning and investment to mitigate carbon impact, options to roll this out across the region will be looked at.

9. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on skills and training within the sector?

Scotland Food & Drink Partnership launched 'The Academy' in February. The Academy is a market-focused and commercially orientated training programme that aims to help Scottish food and drink producers build their brands and thrive in their market places. The first courses are scheduled to launch in May.

Our Food Tourism Co-ordinators met with Ayrshire and Argyll Colleges in February & March to identify skills gaps and find out what courses are targeted towards the hospitality sector. The colleges have drawn up a wider regional list of courses relevant to the food and drink sector. The next step is to approach food and drink sector businesses to find out what skills training packages they require.

East Ayrshire Council officers have met with the Scottish Manufacturing Advisory Service (SMAS) to find out more about the services they can offer in terms of workforce development, culture and leadership. SMAS are now working up some programmes targeted at Ayrshire food and drink businesses.

The Team has been liaising with the AGD Skills Project to identify areas of commonality and ensure that overlap and duplication is eliminated.

Industry is demanding simplification and ease of engagement with the various programs and opportunities and the group will try to identify best solution.

10. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on digital infrastructure within the sector?

Arran's first online Arran Farmers' Market was held on 6 March with 13 producers taking part. Arran's Food Tourism co-ordinator organised this event, in conjunction with Arran EcoSavvy. Video content was created, many lessons learned and there has been over 15,000 clicks on the webpage as a result.

Arransfoodjourney.com went live on the 28th of March with 37 food and drink businesses listed and telling their story.

Both Co-ordinators are facilitating the development of Ayrshire Connect.

The ongoing discussions with SMAS will identify digital and advanced manufacturing opportunities across the sector and supply chains.

11. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on business support for the sector?

The main impact has been the provision of additional funding streams for businesses from the Scottish Government via its Discretionary Fund, as referred to earlier. Without this funding, evidence is telling us that many of our food and drink businesses would face major cash flow difficulties.

The tentative re-opening of the hospitality sector at the end of April should provide an opportunity for businesses to begin trading again, and many of them have already begun to prepare for this. At this stage, evidence suggests they are behaving cautiously until they are able to ascertain what the likely level of demand for their products will be.

12. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has linkage with / impact on Community Wealth Building?

The main focus of our Community Wealth Building activity during the last quarter has been on the procurement pillar. A number of discussions have taken place between members of this group and procurement and economic development colleagues from across the three councils. It is recognised that whilst Council procurement frameworks are now more accessible, nevertheless there are many companies who find the processes challenging. There are significant opportunities for food and drink producers in terms of large-scale catering contracts, and taking advantage of these opportunities has been the main focus of recent discussions.

Further engagement with the Ayrshire CWB Team is planned.

What issues have been identified since the last reporting period?

A number of new home-based small scale food production businesses have emerged since the onset of the pandemic (this includes cake-makers, confectioners, gourmet dining, etc). This has positive economic benefits, but concerns have been raised in relation to food safety and insurance issues.

The team will develop an understanding of how best to support these new start businesses within existing frameworks.

What mitigating actions have been taken/considered to overcome these issues?

Environmental Health Teams within councils continue to monitor the situation.

What actions/support/resources/decisions are required by the Executive Oversight Group or the Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board?

Simplification of communication between and within partner organisations, identifying and developing key actions and their cross cutting opportunities across the region and work streams, would be greatly aided by the adoption of the regional strategy and an aligned, simplified and focussed governance model.

PROGRESS REPORT TO EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT GROUP

Reporting Period: January to April 2021	Sector-Based Support Group: Visitor Economy
	Group Lead: Malcolm Roughead, VisitScotland

Group Objective	Guidelines	Milestone RAG Status
Support the economic recovery and renewal of the above sector, with Community Wealth Building at the heart, in response to the profound and unprecedented impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on the economy.	Milestone completed	
	On target	
	Minor delays up to one month	
	Delays greater than one month	

Key Milestones/Deliverables (e.g. establish group membership, communications plan agreed & by whom, strategic resources plan agreed & by whom)	Due Date	RAG Status
Recovery & Renewal Action Plan produced and agreed by REP	Ongoing	
Active Visitor Economy Strategic Group – chaired by M Roughead / Private & Public sector members	Ongoing	
Sector and industry research Ayrshire Visitor Economy “State of the Nation” Covid19 Industry Research – Impacts and Opportunities	Jan 2021	
Establishment of Destination Development Workstreams – Marketing, Product / Experience, Digital and Covid19 Industry research	Jan 2021	
Develop a Pan-Ayrshire Tourism Action Plan (Short- Medium Term)	March 2021	
Build Industry Engagement to establish an Ayrshire Tourism Collaboration	Jan 2021	
Option analysis for a Regional Collaboration approach	Ongoing	
Identify and develop a Medium to Long-term Action Plan including delivery resources / funding	Sept 2021	
Development of an Ayrshire Visitor Economy Strategic Vision	Sept 2021	
Development and delivery of a Visitor Economy B2B Communication Plan	Ongoing	
Establishment of a collaborative Creative Delivery Group – industry led resourced (staff-time) by the Coig, 3 Ayrshire Councils and Scottish Enterprise	Mid-April 2021	
Development and delivery of a regional market-ready food & Drink pilot project	July 2021	

Key Actions - update on activity:
<p>1. Since the last reporting period, what development has taken place in terms of a recovery and renewal plan for the above sector?</p> <p>Since the last period the Short-to-Medium Term Action Plan to support the visitor economy recovery and renewal plan has delivered key milestones. These include:</p>

- Established and well attended / engaged Visitor Economy Strategic Group – chaired by M Roughead / Private & Public sector members.
- Industry and destination research has been undertaken and used to inform and evidence the development of the collaborative approach and action plan priorities.
- Destination Development Workstreams – Marketing, Product / Experience, Digital and Collaboration are well established and in active delivery phases.
- A Pan-Ayrshire Tourism Action Plan (Short- Medium Term) has been developed and implemented.
- The Collaboration has built industry engagement and communication.
- A new Strategic Vision for the Ayrshire Visitor Economy is in development.
- Options have been explored and developed to create a formalised structure for an ongoing, long-term Regional Collaboration approach.
- Priorities and themes are in development to develop the medium to long-term Action Plan including identifying and mobilising co-working arrangements, delivery resources and funding.
- An Ayrshire Visitor Economy B2B Communication Plan has been developed and is now in phase 1 of delivery.
- A collaborative Creative Delivery Group has been created to respond to sector recovery and renewal by producing a new product and experience for the forthcoming summer/autumn tourism season. This group will be industry led and resourced by The Coig, 3 Ayrshire Councils and Scottish Enterprise.
- The development of a new, regional market-ready Food & Drink pilot project has been agreed with delivery starting mid-April 2021.

Due to the restrictions and ongoing uncertainty with travel, tourism and hospitality re-opening timeframes and sector operational shifts in line with national guidelines and legislation, the Visitor Economy Group aims to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the sector.

2. Since the last reporting period, what quantitative and qualitative information has the group identified, collated & interpreted with regard to the impact of Covid-19 on the sector?

Qualitative research has undertaken through taken the following:

- Workshops and focus groups have been held to identify visitor economy themes, products and experiences that identify Ayrshire's key strengths and priorities for development action. The Phase 1 outcome of this activity is the formation of the Creative Delivery Group and delivery of a Food & Drink Pilot Project.
- Workshops and focus groups have taken place to develop a strategic vision for Ayrshire's visitor economy. This work will carry on throughout the next quarter with wider sector engagement to establish a new shared, strategic vision for Ayrshire tourism.

3. Since the last reporting period, what support has been provided to the sector in terms of a response to the pandemic?

- Since the last period the sector has been supported by the roll out and delivery of digital training through the VisitScotland and business Gateway Digital Boost programme.

- Marketing and promotional activity has been delayed due to Covid19 restrictions in the movement of people, however partners at The Coig and VisitScotland have maintained an Ayrshire presence in the marketplace and across social media. The roll out of the spring-summer marketing plans are in place for launch in late April – early May 2021 to align with the national roadmap for the lifting of restrictions. The campaigns are social media led and include digital promotional work with Hearst Publications, Expedia, Facebook and travel bloggers.
- A Communication Plan has been developed to further engage with the wider Ayrshire industry. An article has been published by M Roughead, VisitScotland to announce the working of the collaboration that makes a call for action for the wider industry to get involved. Monthly messages and updates from the collaboration will be released / shared across partner and business platforms.
- The progress made by the strategic group and industry partners has motivated businesses to dedicated time and resource to the collaborative work. This includes business operators committing considerable personal time and resources to the initiative. In addition, The Coig and public sector partners have allocated staff time to supporting the sector.
- Partners at VisitScotland, the Councils and Scottish Enterprise have been engaged in the delivery and administration of Covid19 business support grants. Information and promotion of these Funds has taken place across partners' media channels. The Coig newsletters provide updates to the sector on a wide range of available support services and initiatives that may benefit business start-up.

4. Since the last reporting period, what actions have been identified and/or implemented to support recovery and renewal within the sector, including financial implications of measures proposed?

The following tangible actions have been identified and mobilised to support the recovery and renewal of the Visitor Economy:

Next Step Actions -

- The establishment of a collective movement is now in place that will lead the economic shift to Ayrshire's visitor economy that will meet how the Ayrshire sector will economically grow, be perceived and how it will co-deliver and measure new success for the Ayrshire sector. This will enable Ayrshire's ambitions to play a role in the delivery of the national Scotland Outlook 2030 strategy and deliver a new vision for a 21st century Ayrshire tourism economy.
- Immediate steps are being put in place to create new experiences for visitors that will communicate messages that resonate with businesses, the communities and with future tourists and day visitors.
- A clear focus has been adopted on steps that need to be taken by the medium- and long-term action plan that delivers a sustainable and resilient visitor economy through the regional collaboration.
- Steps are being put in place to prepare Ayrshire communities, political, and business leaders together with our citizens and our employees to be ready for Ayrshire's tourism destination development journey.

Measures Proposed - The following measures have been identified for next-steps delivery:

- Activities will reverse existing trends especially in uplifting overnight stays and spending initially in the domestic tourist markets and then with international tourists.
- Actions will be set in place to improve the management of day visitors (flows, behaviour, and spending) and aim to distribute visitors across the region.
- Better visitor experiences will be developed that will generate higher value pricing, repeat visits, loyalty, and higher levels of satisfaction.
- There will be a focus on reducing seasonality and the usual cycle of peaks and troughs.
- Stimulating community involvement and benefits from the visitor economy with tighter local supply chains and reduced economic leakage.
- Creating better quality and better paid jobs for local people will be a priority outcome of the collaborative's actions.
- Capacity building work will be established to increase residents understand of their region, tourism and generating civic pride.

The Approach

- Qualitative growth based upon a curated collection of unique, authentic, Ayrshire experiences that reflect strong Ayrshire stories and optimises existing assets (people and place).
- Delivered in an inclusive, collaborative, and co-created manner involving and integrating a wide range of Ayrshire businesses, communities, and other interested parties.
- Based upon market-facing, market tested and compelling stories that will connect multiple elements (assets) to create a cohesive, understandable, accessible and bookable experiences (individually and collectively).
- Undertaken with clearly defined roles and responsibilities thus avoiding duplication of effort and resources.
- Delivering multiple, measurable, benefits across the region.
- Inclusive and open to all.

The Outcomes

- Uplift in visitor spending per trip for both day visitors and overnight tourists by staying longer on each trip, exposing visitors to more opportunities to spend locally, extending the season, encouraging repeat visitation, and converting day visitors to returning overnight stays.
- Creating added value, innovative, experiences that can be delivered by any sector within the region's economy and involving local supply chains: thus, reducing economic leakage from the region and driving synergy across the region's economy strengths.
- Creating new clusters and networks of collaboration involving a wide-range of interests, skills, talent, and disciplines that harness digital technologies to leverage competitive advantage.
- Influencing visitor travel patterns, behaviour and perceptions (of Ayrshire and a place to live, work, study and visit).
- Raising the profile and adding momentum to Ayrshire's contribution to the UN SDGs.
- Stimulating new investment to fill product gaps and to meet new demand.
- Building the human resources capacity through bespoke leadership and specific skill development programs.

Financial / Resource Implications – The following resources have been identified for next-step actions.

- The Directors of The Coig will resources 3 months of part-time staff time and associated costs to the appointment of a Creative Director to develop the Food & Drink pilot project.
- The 3 Ayrshire Councils and Scottish Enterprise have committed staff-time resources to work with the Creative Director to deliver the Food & Drink pilot project.
- Scottish Government funding awarded to North Ayrshire Council to develop an Ayrshire-wide collaborative regional tourism approach will be utilised for revenue spend incurred by the development of the Food & Drink pilot project, industry engagement and the digital implementation of new products and experiences created. This funding will be managed and monitored by North Ayrshire Council.
- The Creative Delivery Group will report to the AVESG.

5. Since the last reporting period, what collaborative work has taken place with the other sector-based recovery and renewal groups to ensure a joined-up approach?

Since the last reporting period a joined-up approach has been taken by the Ayrshire Visitor Economy Collaborative Group throughout all actions, engagement and participation at meetings and development workshops / focus groups.

<p>6. What engagement has taken place since the last reporting period with local businesses and the wider community, and what support has been realised from this?</p> <p>See above.</p>
<p>7. Since the last reporting period, what work has been identified or undertaken that has linkage with / impact on the Ayrshire Growth Deal?</p> <p>The Ayrshire Growth Deal projects have been integrated into the development and delivery of the Collaborative's actions on the development of new products and experiences for visitors. Themes such as marine tourism and aerospace have been identified to be integrated into new initiatives.</p>
<p>8. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on climate change?</p> <p>The Coig, through funding awarded by NatureScot has commissioned an Ayrshire Visitor Management Study that identifies actions that will impact climate change and impact the sustainability in the sector. A final report is due late-April 2021. The visitor Management study identifies visitor pressure points and issues and makes recommendations on how these can be managed.</p> <p>(Visitor management also includes the impact of visitors on infrastructure, place cleansing, travel. Transport and parking, honey-spot visitor sites / pressure points, seasonality, managing visitor behaviour and data collection.)</p> <p>* Recommendation - Presentation of outcomes of the Ayrshire Visitor Management Study at the next meeting.</p>
<p>9. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on skills and training within the sector?</p> <p>See below.</p>
<p>10. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on digital infrastructure within the sector?</p> <p>Digital training has been identified and delivered that will impact skills and training of the sector. Better use of digital business systems has been identified as a need across the sector. Further work with TravelTech Scotland will be developed to address this.</p>
<p>11. What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has an impact on business support for the sector?</p> <p>This work is taking place through the Scottish Tourism Alliance, industry associations and stakeholders. The STA takes an active role in the AVESG ensuring the work taking place in the Ayrshire sector is informed and engaged in wider national conversations.</p>

12.What work has been identified or undertaken since the last reporting period that has linkage with / impact on Community Wealth Building?

CWB is a thematic priority across the development of all Visitor Economy collaborative work that enables communities and businesses to engage and participate in the development and delivery of collaborative activities. All development work includes community involvement.

What issues have been identified since the last reporting period?

Uncertainty of timeframe and guidance for the sector to lift restrictions and re-start business operations. This impacts industry engagement and time resources.

What mitigating actions have been taken/considered to overcome these issues?

Prudent management of the action plan and delivery resources.

What actions/support/resources/decisions are required by the Executive Oversight Group or the Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board?

The AEP board is requested to support the progress and next step actions of the AVESG.

The AEP welcome a presentation of outcomes of the recent Ayrshire Visitor Management Study by The Coig at the next meeting.