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### A Message from the Chair...

Earlier this month SLAED Vice Chair, Pamela Stevenson and I attended the SOLACE Scotland Conference where there was a wealth of discussions on local government issues. Focus was given to the recent Verity House Agreement, where collaborative working at the national and local government level will focus on tackling child poverty, transforming our economy through a just transition to delivering net zero and delivering sustainable person-centred public services. There was an opportunity for some pause for thought during an extremely interesting presentation from John McLaren, Political Economist, "How does the state of the economy impact on the future for public services in Scotland?" In summary, a key concern is the reduction in productivity growth in recent years due to the pandemic, working from home, EU Exit, war in Ukraine, etc. which impacts on the ability to get regular rises in the standard of living (real incomes) or revenue to fund rising demand for public services. In general, we continue to live in an age of uncertainty.

However, that said, there are still many great initiatives, projects and interventions being delivered by local authorities across Scotland, where some examples are highlighted in this newsletter; many of which focus on the themes within the Verity House Agreement.

After ten years of collecting economic data, led by the SLAED Performance Group, chaired by Gary Hughes, Aberdeenshire Council, it is remarkable to see the size of the collective local government effort displayed in the infographic article. More people working, greater external funding leveraged, almost 80,000 new businesses and over 173,500 people helped into work are just some of the successes. In particular, such achievements demonstrate how local government economic development interventions are integral to the development and delivery of the six programmes, 18 projects and 77 actions outlined in the National Strategy for Economic Transformation.

– Ishabel Bremner, SLAED Chair

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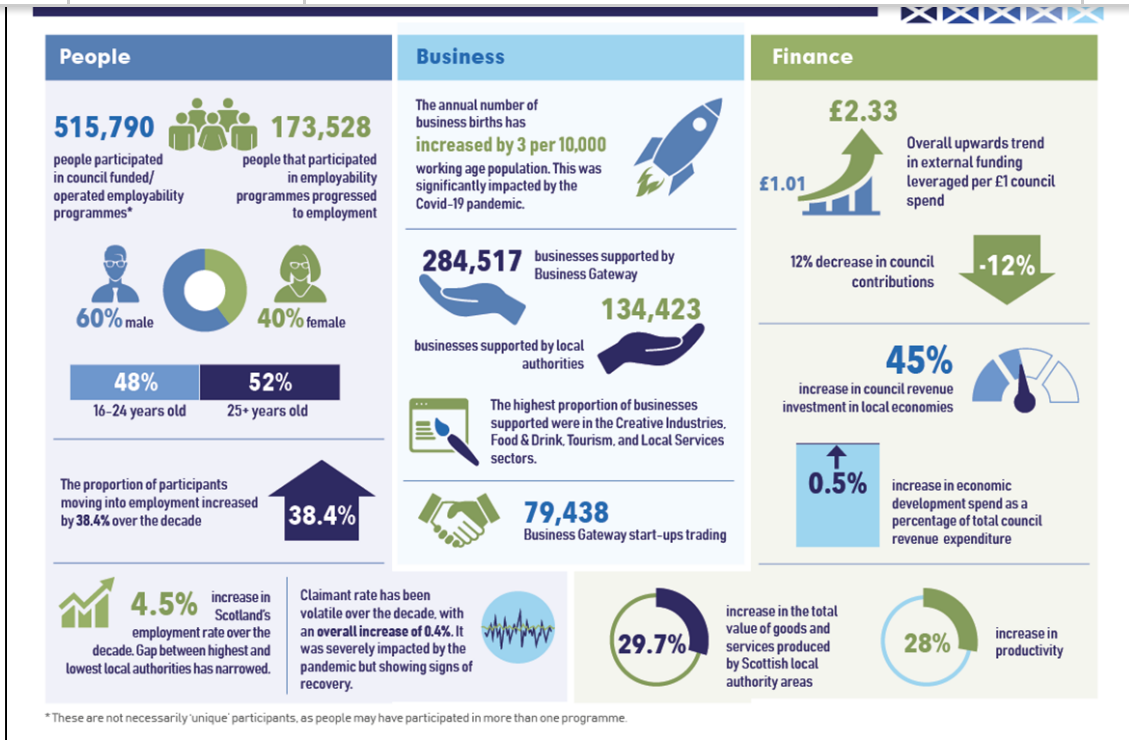
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## SLAED Indicators 10-Year Trends

To mark the tenth anniversary of the SLAED Indicators Framework, the Performance Group has produced an infographic showing the significant impact local authority economic development delivery has had over the period. The group looked at the ten years' worth of data from the SLAED Indicators Framework and has highlighted the key trends.

The analysis shows that 517,790 people took part in council funded or operated employability programmes, with 173,528 then moving into work. The proportion of participants moving into employment increased by 38.4% over the decade.

SLAED also identified a 29.7% increase in the value of goods and services produced by businesses in Scotland.

Other key findings include:

- Scotland's employment rate increased by 4.5% over the decade, with the gap between highest and lowest local authority areas narrowing
- Business Gateway supported 284,517 businesses over the period and councils supported an additional 134,423 businesses
- There was a 45% increase in council revenue investment in local economies
- External funding leveraged rose from £1.01 to £2.33 per £1 contributed by councils

Gary Hughes, SLAED Performance Group Chair, said: "Local authorities across Scotland deliver a wide variety of public services to support local economies. After ten years of collecting economic data, it is remarkable to see the size of this collective effort as displayed in the infographic released today. More people working, greater external funding leveraged, almost 80,000 new businesses, 173,500 people helped into work, are all things to be celebrated."

Download the infographic [here](#).

All annual SLAED Indicators Framework reports from 2012-13 are available on the [SLAED website](#).

## Data and Reporting Group Update



The Data & Reporting Group has been established to support the implementation and continuous improvement of the Scottish Government's [Shared Measurement Framework](#) for Employability.

The Group meets every 6 weeks and is chaired by Scottish Government (OCEA) and representatives from a number of local authorities. Over the past few months, the Group has been focussing its efforts on refining the guidance on the data collection and reporting requirements of the No One Left Behind (NOLB) funding for employability and clarifying any issues raised by local authorities. Ahead of the first NOLB data submission quarter for 2023/24, a virtual drop-in session was held mid July for all relevant local authority staff to attend and raise any issues or concerns about providing data and the quality of the data provided.

Feedback from the Data & Reporting Group is provided regularly via the main SLAED People Group.



## Employability Project Sowing the Seeds for Success

The Employment Support Team at Aberdeenshire Council recently facilitated a project which involved a group of 11 Syrian women creating a wonderful children's garden area at the West Parish Church in Inverurie. With the project running over 7 weeks, the group were involved in all stages; from planning the project, to identifying the resources required and the costs associated, as well as undertaking the tasks required to construct the garden. Their creative creations included a bamboo xylophone, teacup planters, bunting, a beehive, hopscotch and a noughts and crosses game.

There was great commitment, enthusiasm, and team work to undertake the project within the timescales set. The group celebrated the end of their project with a well-attended open morning and welcomed the attendance of local Councillors Marion Ewenson and Neil Baillie. More recently judges from the prestigious Britain in Bloom competition came to view the community garden.

The project brought an opportunity to develop numerous employability skills which included improving communication and language, teamwork, problem solving, leadership, budgeting and health and safety awareness. These skills have been a valuable addition to the women's CV's and they are able to highlight their newly acquired skills in job interviews. Some of the group members have already moved on into substantive volunteering roles following the project and there has been a successful employment outcome too.

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All 32 local Authorities in Scotland are members of the Supplier Development Programme (SDP) which not only provides free tender training and support to Scottish SMEs, third sector and social enterprises, but also supports its members to deliver the Sustainable Procurement Duty and Community Wealth Building.



How you might ask? Well by using a proven business model to host market supplier engagement sessions and aligned tender training, SDP raises awareness of and connects local businesses to contract opportunities and projects to encourage businesses and social enterprises to get tender ready.

This model offers a lifeline to micro and sole traders who really do benefit from the “hand holding” to use Public Contracts Scotland and PCS–Tender and gain access to the documents, understand how to respond and helpful practical advice on what needs to be in their response.

Councils and the wider public sector members of SDP can then demonstrate a positive, proactive approach to engage local businesses with reportable outcomes and sometimes a GO Award recognition.

SDP also works with several framework operators such as Scotland Excel, SPA and p4f Scotland, to join up tender support. Opening the supply chain up is just as important and SDP though their corporate membership for private sector contractors’ facilities further connection of buyers and suppliers.



## East Dunbartonshire Circular Economy Strategy

East Dunbartonshire Council has produced a Circular Economy Strategy, developed in partnership with local businesses and other organisations active in the area.

The Circular Economy is about reducing waste, using resources sustainably and keeping materials in circulation for as long as possible. It goes beyond recycling by also focusing on reducing the volume of raw materials entering the production process in the first place and effectively ‘designing out waste’.

A circular economy isn’t just good for the environment – it can reduce costs, drive innovation and strengthen links between businesses, organisations and local communities.

East Dunbartonshire’s Circular Economy Strategy includes actions to make the operation of the Council more circular as well as sharing advice and support for residents and local businesses. The delivery of the strategy will be overseen by the East Dunbartonshire Economic Partnership which brings various partners together through quarterly meetings.

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## Sunhope Packaging Machinery (UK) Ltd Chooses Fife to Run UK Operations

Sunhope Packaging Machinery (ZHENJIANG) Co., Ltd a world-leading provider of innovative packaging solutions is establishing a new UK division called Sunhope Packaging Machinery (UK) Ltd in Glenrothes.



After considering potential sites in France, The Netherlands, and Belgium, Sunhope chose to establish a factory in the UK. Working alongside Scottish Development International (SDI) and InvestFife, Sunhope Packaging were able to identify and acquire the ideal site at Southfield Industrial Estate. The Glenrothes site was selected due to its proximity to existing Sunhope customers and its easy access to major road networks of Central Scotland and Edinburgh Airport for receiving international customers.

Sunhope has very strong ambitions to be a green business and has been successful in obtaining “Net Zero” grant funding to assist them with building a green and sustainable business in Fife through Business Gateway Fife. As well as “Net Zero” grants the business has benefitted from Specialist Business Advice from Business Gateway Fife and Scottish Enterprise.

The site is being fully refurbished mostly by local Fife businesses to serve as a modern facility and demonstration hub, showcasing Sunhope machines to potential customers from the UK, Europe, North America, and beyond.



## 40th Anniversary of 'Local Hero' Celebrated in Aberdeenshire

The 40th anniversary of the film Local Hero was celebrated with a long weekend of events and screenings. Supported by Aberdeenshire Council, screenings were run by Cinescapes, which specialises in outdoor screenings in the Scottish landscapes that inspired them. The project was supported by Aberdeenshire Council's Coastal Community Fund via the Banff and Buchan Area Committee.

Director Bill Forsyth's classic comedy is one of the most popular and successful films ever made in Scotland. The film, which tells the story of an American oil man who falls in love with Scotland, was partly filmed in the tiny coastal village of Pennan.

Jonathan Melville, author of the book 'Local Hero: Making a Scottish Classic' said: "It's a very important film – because it was a Scottish writer and director showing you could make a film for a global audience. Hollywood legend Burt Lancaster has a major role in the film and came to Scotland to take part. Many of the key moments take place at the 'phone box on the

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summer. Bann and Fortsoy also hosted weekend screenings. Total admissions were 955.

Founder of Cinetopia, the company behind Cinescapes, Amanda Rogers said: "Local Hero is an utterly charming film which has stood the test of time. We are particularly excited to be working with Jonathan Melville to explore stories behind the making of the film and its impact on the Aberdeenshire area and on the film industry in Scotland."

In the concluding report it was evident from both the comments and the extensive media coverage received, that the Local Hero 40th Anniversary project significantly expanded the reach, length and scope of the original proposal. Aply accommodating audiences at a very local level but at the same time, the ripple effect was felt both nationally and internationally. The film was re-released in UK cinemas on May 19 by distributors Park Circus.

**'Local Hero' film still Credit: Park Circus Films.**

## Amp Energy Commence Build of Largest Battery Storage Facilities in Europe



Amp Energy is a global energy transition company that develops, owns and operates clean energy assets. Alongside Amp X, their disruptive grid-edge technology platform utilising proprietary artificial intelligence expertise, they are part of Scotland's Energy Transition. The company is headquartered in Toronto with global operations throughout North America, Australia, Japan, Spain, Czech Republic, and the UK.

Founded in 2009, Amp Energy is backed by major investments from institutional capital partners including most recently Carlyle, which invested US\$374 million for a minority stake in the company in late 2020.

The first Battery Storage Facility began construction in July 2023, at the **Hunterston Estate, in North Ayrshire**. This facility will be capable of storing 400 MW of renewable energy generated power. Two other projects, in Scotland, are being lined up to create a "battery storage belt" across Central Scotland. This first project, in North Ayrshire, is expected to go live in Q4 2024 as part of the "Scottish Green Battery Complex".

Following consultations with stakeholders and North Ayrshire Council the site received planning consent from the Scottish Government in 2022. The 400 MW batteries will be the largest grid-connected battery storage facilities in Europe. The projects will provide reliable grid stability services and power management across the central belt of Scotland. By storing and managing the dispatch of renewable energy generated from Scottish windfarms, the projects are providing a future-proofing the UK's renewable electricity infrastructure.

Following the recent [ScotWind offshore wind](#) announcement for the planned addition of 25 GW of new renewable

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is even more critical. Over the coming years, Amp's Scottish battery facilities will enable up to 1,750 GWhrs per year of additional renewable energy to be generated in Scotland and transported to other regions of the UK.



## Scotland Loves Local Gift Card Brought Multi-Million Pound Boost to Glasgow

Action by Glasgow City Council to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis delivered a £7.59 million boost for city businesses. In the summer of 2022, the council distributed Scotland Loves Local Glasgow Gift Cards worth £105 to 85,000 low-income households across the city as a means of supporting people and families during the cost-of-living crisis, whilst also boosting the local economy.

And, one year on from the gift cards being sent to eligible households, the local authority and city businesses acknowledged its impact, as just over £7.59million has been spent in Glasgow businesses through the card. The success of the programme was highlighted as part of the first Scotland Loves Local Week, which aimed to shine a spotlight on the critical need for everyone to choose local to help ensure the survival of businesses and services in their community, laying the foundations for a stronger future.

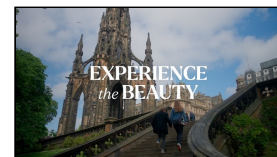
The Scotland Loves Local Glasgow Gift Card could only be spent with registered businesses within Glasgow, locking money into the city's economy. There are 950 businesses registered to accept the card in the city.

The full news story can be read [here](#).

Scotland Loves Local: <https://lovelocal.scot/>

## Forever Edinburgh: Launch of Two New Campaigns

Forever Edinburgh are delighted to reveal the launch of two new campaigns, which showcase the many ways residents and visitors can enjoy Scotland's capital city.



### New inbound Leisure visitor campaign: 'Experience the Beauty'

[Experience the Beauty](#) is a brand-new inbound leisure visitor campaign, which aims to position Edinburgh as the UK's top city break destination for memorable experiences in 2023 and 2024 to domestic overnight visitors.

Showcasing unique experiences such as the exhilaration of a rib trip on the River Forth, the breathtaking panoramic views from Calton Hill, and the warming experience of sipping Scotland's national drink, this campaign will put Edinburgh at the forefront of travellers planning their next getaway.

The campaign will also promote Edinburgh as an inclusive and



partnerships.

At the heart of the campaign is a brand-new hero film. ([Water the video playlist](#))

### **'Resident Rewards Edinburgh' expanded programme**

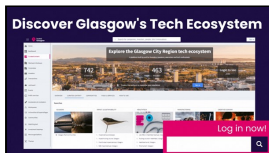
Building on the success of the popular [Resident Rewards Edinburgh](#) programme, this has been expanded to offer more year-round exciting offers, available exclusively to city of Edinburgh residents. Resident Rates, Half Price and Free Days, Resident Previews and Annual Passes have now joined the Monthly Star Reward, offering more ways for Edinburgh residents to explore more of their city for less.

[The Monthly Star Reward](#) will continue to offer one high value reward from one local business each month. Residents can now also enjoy special [Resident Rates](#) to a range of attractions and tours across the city; [Half Price and Free Days](#) on certain days or times of month; the opportunity to enjoy exclusive access to the city's newest experiences first through [Resident Previews](#) will provide residents; and can enjoy a year's worth of visits to their favourite attraction with the [Annual Pass](#).

An integrated campaign comprising of digital, out-of-home and print will raise geo-target city of Edinburgh residents between now and 2025.

Watch the new [Resident Rewards Edinburgh promotional film](#)

(Both of these campaign have been funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund).



## **Data Hub Showcases Investment Flow for Glasgow's Tech Success**

Glasgow City Council's adoption of a database to promote the great work going on in the city's tech ecosystem has put Scotland's largest city region in the top three in the UK for venture capital funding.

The [Glasgow Tech Ecosystem Platform](#), launched late last year by the Digital Economy team, is already proving to be a gamechanger. With free access for organisations with a presence or interest in the city region and the wider tech economy, it is powered by *dealroom.co*, a global data platform for intelligence on businesses that has established itself as the foremost data provider on start-ups, early-stage and growth company ecosystems around the globe.

The recently published [Glasgow City Region Ecosystem Report](#), which highlights the strengths and potential areas of growth in the startup ecosystem, revealed an eight per cent growth in Venture Capital (VC) funding in Q2 in 2023 compared to 2022, with £170 million raised by start-ups over that period.

In fact, Glasgow is shown to be bucking a largely downward European trend for start-up and scale-up venture capital and ranks third on a list of UK cities for VC investment, behind Manchester at 25 per cent growth and Birmingham on 18 per

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The enterprise value of the Glasgow City Region Tech Ecosystem currently stands at £3.4 billion – that is an 89% rise since 2018. Glasgow-based universities, meanwhile, have featured twice in the UK's top 20 for most spinouts.

This initiative is fully aligned to the national Government-commissioned Scottish Technology Ecosystem Review, a central objective of which is to attract and funnel investment to strengthen and grow the 'market-square' for technology ecosystems.

The full story can be read [here](#).

## Supporting a Single, Unemployed Mother Into Self Employment

Single mother Lucy came to Sarah, Parental Employment Key Worker at Futures for Families in Perth & Kinross Council, with a dream of starting up her very own horse grooming business. She already had a wide range of experience with horses before she had her child, but as an unemployed, single mother she could not manage this financially.



After an initial meeting, Sarah and Lucy agreed that the Elev8 Training Grant would be the best option for her. Through this grant the council was able to cover the costs of a horse grooming course, which in time will allow Lucy to become a fully certified riding instructor, and provide all the safety equipment and clothing she would need to kick start her business.

Lucy recently took on her very first client and the programme will continue to support her throughout her self-employment journey and encourage her progression.

Lucy said: "This has been a dream of mine since I was 7 years old to have my own wee business with horses & it wouldn't be possible without the help I've had from you. I hope you know the difference you are making to people's lives...."



## Pre-Employability Support and Training in Argyll & Bute

Funded by the Scottish Government's Young Person's Guarantee and No One Left Behind, the Clyde Fishermen's Trust provided pre-employability support and training with a focus on maritime industries in Argyll and Bute. The programme supported 11 unemployed participants across three separate courses. Participants received hands-on experience, certification and training required to pursue a career in the fishing maritime industries.

During the course all participants:

- Completed certificated training in Seafish Sea Survival, Seafish First Aid, Seafish Fire Fighting & prevention, Seafish Health & Safety, Seafish Introduction to

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- Received a small subsistence allowance.
- Worked closely with an Employability Officer to build confidence and employability skills; job searching, CV writing, etc.
- Undertook a four week supported work placement on a local boat which paid the Real Living Wage.

The programme was extremely successful with all 11 participants entering employment or self-employment on completion of their work placement.

## Community Benefit Success Story in East Renfrewshire Council



Roman is a Ukrainian national who arrived in the United Kingdom to escape the ongoing conflict in his home country. He was referred to the Resettlement Employment Adviser in the Employability team (Work EastRen) from the East Renfrewshire Council Resettlement team, as he was looking for work.

It was established that Roman was looking for construction work, as he had previous experience in Ukraine, but had no CSCS card. Training was arranged with a local training provider to complete this, paid for through the discretionary fund. He successfully completed the training and was supported to obtain his CSCS Labourer card.

Through the council's Community Benefits Partnership, the Work EastRen Business Liaison Officer had access to employment opportunities which had been brokered with Heron Brothers Limited, a large construction firm who are completing work locally as part of the Neilston Learning Campus contract. The Resettlement Employment Adviser spoke with Roman about the opportunity and created a CV to reflect his experience, including his CSCS card. An interview was arranged and, although his English was limited, he managed to perform well and was offered the job. He was supported with the purchase of work boots and waterproof clothing. He started in October 2022 and continues to progress well within the role. In July 2023 he reached 39 weeks sustainment, has applied for his provisional driving licence and is looking to buy a car soon.

Roman reports it is very cold working outside in Scotland but he is enjoying the job. The Site Manager has reported that Roman continues to work hard and is thriving. He is a key member of the team and they see a bright future for him with HBL.



## Race to Zero Roadshows Boost Net Zero Ambitions for Fife Pupils

The Race to Zero" roadshows organised by Fife Council's Economic Development and Employability Services have successfully boosted net zero ambitions for Fife pupils. These

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the Culture of Enterprise Programme. As a result, app downloads have increased by 274% over the course of the month.

The Race to Zero app, developed and funded through a collaboration between Economic Development, Employability, Education and European partners is designed to enable pupils to transition their own virtual town from traditional fossil fuels to a greener, sustainable, 100% renewable energy network by 2050. Through the app, pupils gain an understanding of the current challenges facing businesses and how to realise net zero ambitions through investment decisions.

The app aligns with the curriculum, emphasising enterprise and STEM-related subjects, and was developed in line with Skills Development Scotland's Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan. Local businesses contributed to the app development by providing live examples of how they are working towards achieving net zero targets, thereby building pupils' knowledge and skills required for future jobs that contribute to the local Fife Economy.

## Meet the Buyer North Brings Businesses Together for Largest Free Procurement Event in North of Scotland



The Supplier Development Programme (SDP) held its sixth annual [Meet the Buyer North event](#) on Tuesday, 12 September as an in-person event at the Music Hall in Aberdeen.

Partnered by the Scottish Government and the Commercial and Procurement Shared Services, this free event allowed local businesses based in the north of Scotland to connect directly with the public sector to learn about upcoming contracts and opportunities worth £14.5bn in Scotland.

The [agenda](#) included an open panel Question and Answer session, with speakers from Scottish Government, the Commercial & Procurement Shared Services and SDP offering SMEs, Social Enterprises and Third Sector organisations a forum to talk all things procurement.

More than 20 buyers from the public and private sector discussed their contracts, supply chain opportunities and projects that they are delivering in the region. There were also opportunities to network with other businesses.



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