

Welcome

County Councillors from
West and Northwest Regions in Iceland

Agenda

- 09:30 Welcome Address**
(Councillor Steven Heddle, COSLA Vice President)
- 09:45 Introduction to Scottish Local Government**
(Simon Cameron, Chief Officer - Workforce and Corporate Policy Team)
- 10:10 COSLA and Business Gateway**
(Hugh Lightbody, Chief Officer - Business Gateway National Unit)
- 10:35 Break**
- 11:00 COSLA Economic Policy**
(Calum Lindsay, Policy Manager - Environment and Economy)
- 11:25 COSLA Just Transition to Net Zero**
(Silke Isbrand, Policy Manager - Environment and Economy)
- 11:50 Wellbeing Communities**
(Mike Callagan, Policy Manager – Communities)
(Chris Murray, Policy Manager – Migration, Population and Diversity)
- 12:15 Close and Lunch**



Business Gateway

Icelandic Delegation Presentation

Hugh Lightbody, Chief Officer

August 2023



Overview

- Structure
- Remit
- What we deliver
- Achievements
- Partnership and Collaboration
- Service Design
- Challenges

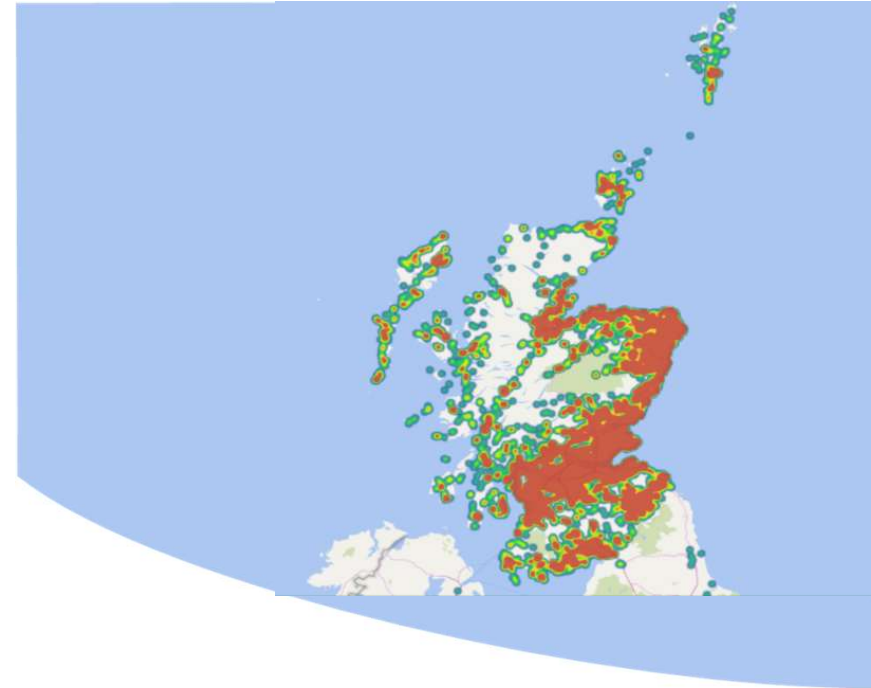


Structure

- A universal business support service managed and delivered by Local Government in partnership and collaboration with the enterprise and skills agencies
- Over 50 local offices and around 170 business advisers the length and breadth of Scotland
- Central enquiry and information service managed and staffed by Scottish Enterprise
- Operational Network of Local Authority managers overseeing the local service (Business Gateway Operational Network)
- National Unit providing core services: customer research, operations, CRM, marketing

Remit

- Business Gateway's vision is:
 - **To provide free business support for anyone in Scotland**
 - We want to help entrepreneurs who need support to develop their businesses by providing one-to-one business advice, and by strengthening the connection between organisations and the business community.
- The core Business Gateway services are:
 - **support for start-ups;**
 - **support for existing and growing businesses**
 - **a continued focus on digital enablement and skills**
- A consistent national service with local flexibility



What we deliver

- Provide one to many support through guides and content on the comprehensive website
- Deliver a catalogue of core webinars that help to develop key business skills
 - Objective is to ensure that people starting and growing businesses have covered the basics that they need to know to start, run or grow a business effectively
 - These include financial management, book-keeping, sales and marketing and basic digital skills such as websites, social media and e-commerce
- Ad-hoc webinars delivering specific training





What we deliver

- Experienced and qualified advisers working one to one with growing businesses to realise their potential
- Signpost to other services from partner agencies such as Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise for leadership development, innovation etc.
- Signpost to other specialist support, for example, internationalisation from Scottish Development International



Achievements

✓ Three-year survival rate for start-ups supported by BG is 55%

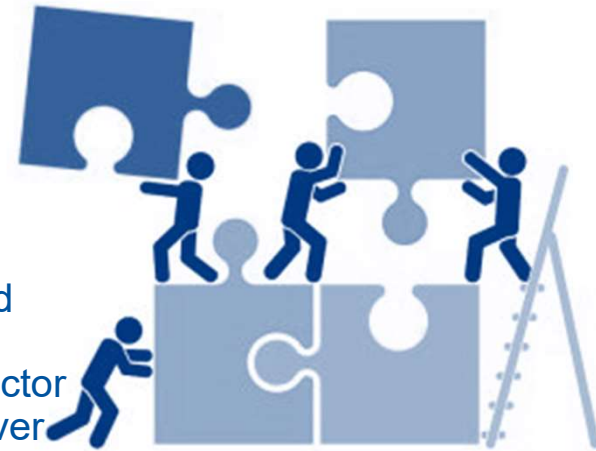
✓ From 2008 to 2022 over 125,000 start-ups assisted creating more than 100,000 jobs. Cost of delivery c£82m. Cost per job c£656. Value for money!

✓ 78% of people are satisfied with the service. 80% would recommend it and 85% say their business will benefit from it. Significant % say that the main benefit is the survival of the business

✓ In 22-23 we supported over 54,000 unique customers, met around 24,000 webinar attendees and handled over 30,000 enquiries

Partnership and Collaboration

- The Enterprise and Skills Review completed in 2017 identified clutter and confusion in the business support landscape. The Business Support Partnership was created to begin the process of simplifying the public sector ecosystem, collaborating across partners to remove duplication and deliver the services the customer wanted
- Key elements of this will be better use of data to gather insights that will help shape the support provided and clarity on who is best placed to deliver specific support based on a Target Operating Model
- The National Strategy for Economic Transformation also seeks a more streamlined delivery system and the BSP is well placed to deliver on that commitment
- Of late, the focus is turning to the two key aspects of data and the 'front door'



Service Design

- Building on the Voice of the Customer and input from the network we have undertaken a service design project 'Gateway to the Future'
- The Design Drivers identified for what makes a good experience for Business Owners were:
 - **Personalised**
 - A tailored experience, to ensure every business owner feels valued throughout their journey.
 - **Accessible**
 - Easy to understand and fulfilling to accomplish. Allowing business owners to see their progress and trust the process.
 - **Time-saving**
 - Bringing resources and support straight to the business owners, allowing them to work on their terms, in their own time.





Challenges

- Structural changes in Government and financial pressure on public sector
- Integrating NSET, FM's Policy Portfolio, Verity House Agreement, New Deal for Business and myriad other strategies
- Multiple linked priorities: Wellbeing economy, just transition to net-zero, Fair Work, tackling poverty, public sector reform
- Appetite of business community to engage in Government priorities
 - Implementation of Fair Work conditionality has suppressed demand with potential for lost economic opportunities
 - FSB survey suggests:
 - 38% of SMEs have no understanding of Net Zero targets.
 - 44% of SMEs have made no changes to work towards Net Zero targets.
 - 81% of SMEs have not engaged with any public sector support for Net Zero activity.
 - 61% of SMEs said there is not enough support available to help with Net Zero transition.
 - 70% of SMEs have never run any public contracts (but only 8% of SMEs are registered on Public Contracts Scotland).

Thank you!

Just Transition - Economy

- The Just Transition is an economic transformation to a net zero carbon economy and society which does not burden those least able to pay.
- Principle set out in the reports of the Just Transition Commission
- COSLA are working on delivering a Just Transition through the following areas:
 - i. Planning – National Planning Framework 4
 - ii. Economic Development - Community Wealth Building
 - iii. Regeneration – 20 minute neighbourhoods, town centres, Place Based Investment Programme

Planning

- National Planning Framework 4 formally adopted by Scottish Parliament in February 2023
- Key statutory document which repositions Scotland's planning system as an enabler of the just transition to net zero
- Places increased focus on renewable energy, sustainable transport and decarbonised heating

Economic Development

- Community Wealth Building – a people and place focused approach to economic development
- Based on 5 key pillars:
 1. Plural Ownership
 2. Finance
 3. Fair Employment
 4. Progressive Procurement
 5. Land and Property
- Scotland introducing world's first Community Wealth Building Legislation

Place and Regeneration

- 20 Minute Neighbourhoods – Service delivery at the community level
- Town Centre Action Plans – Towns for the wellbeing of people, planet and the economy
- Regeneration – Present day solutions for the mistakes of yesterday's economic transition



How do we 'do' net zero in COSLA/Scotland?

Silke Isbrand
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Deliver a Just Transition to a Net Zero Economy

In line with the principles of a 'just transition', Local Government makes a meaningful contribution to the 2030 climate change target and is a key leader and driver of local economies.

Why?

The imperative to transition to a net zero economy is a direct response to worsening climate change. It requires fundamental change to many aspects of the economy and society over the next two decades and more, which will need to be delivered in as fair a way as possible. This priority also recognises that there is an economic and societal benefit of taking action on climate change, and that inaction will lead to worse outcomes, including increasing levels of poverty.

We Will:

- Work with Scottish Government and our Local Government partners to ensure just transition is well coordinated at the national level.
- Focus on those high carbon sectors which have the strongest connection to the economy and society e.g. transport and heat.
- Argue for greater investment in Local Government which can be used to fund local net zero projects and programmes.
- Work in partnership to deliver a streamlined and more effective business support landscape;
- Work in partnership to develop and deliver the actions within the National Strategy for Economic Transformation



.... how do we do NZ?

Legal net zero national targets

Local/regional net zero targets

Local Government unitary structure & block grant from Scottish Government



.... how do we do NZ?

LA targets & implementation plans

Public Sector Reporting Duty

‘Race to net zero’ – a fast transition is not necessarily a just transition



.... how do we do NZ?

Our focus:

Transport – Active travel

Heat and Buildings – Energy Efficiency

Waste and Recycling – carbon reduction and circular economy

Biodiversity and Nature Based Solutions

Just transition



.... how do we do NZ?

Scottish Government and Parliament

Tight partnership working – public sector and beyond

SSN & SSN LA Forum

Lobbying for national roadmap

Area wide focus (Climate Intelligence Service)



Thank you for your interest

Silke Isbrand

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COSLA Environment and Economy team

Support the Most Vulnerable in our Communities

X

Benefits

- Most welfare benefits are delivered by UK Government's Dept for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- However, Local Govt delivers "Housing Benefit" on behalf of DWP as well as Council Tax Reductions, Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments on behalf of the Scottish Govt
- More recently, Social Security Scotland's rollout of devolved Disability Benefits has seen COSLA work closely with this agency to ensure that the 2-way data sharing between itself and Local Govt supports claims decision making
- COSLA officers continue to engage with both UK and Scottish Govt depts and are actively involved in various aspects of Social Security policy development.
- This work is informed by a Welfare and Social Security Advisory Group comprised of a representative group of senior Local Govt practitioners.
- Resulting updates and governance reports are considered by the COSLA Communities and Wellbeing Board and COSLA Leaders'.

Employability

- In March 2018, *No One Left Behind: next steps for employability support* was published. It set out the shared ambition of Scottish & Local Govt to deliver more effective and joined-up employability support across Scotland.
- The No One Left Behind approach is designed to be flexible and person-centred, as well being aligned with other key services such as health, justice and housing. It aims to help people of all ages who face the greatest barriers to the labour market.
- COSLA officers work closely with the Scottish Govt, Councils, and Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) to promote the leadership needed to transform Scotland's employability support system. This includes regular engagement between COSLA's Wellbeing Spokesperson and the Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy.

Community Justice/Safety

- Scotland has one of the highest prison rate in Western Europe. Arrivals to prison are disproportionately from the most deprived areas.
- That said, crime in Scotland is at one of the lowest levels seen since 1974. However, sexual crimes have been on a long-term upward trend since 1974.
- Local Govt has a fundamental role in driving the preventative, person-centred and public health approach needed to address the socio-economic drivers of crime and violence, to help reduce the prison population in longer term.
- Local authorities are also at the heart of statutory community justice arrangements, working to reduce reoffending and promote reintegration, with a strong commitment to public protection and partnership working.
- COSLA works closely with Scottish Govt, local authorities and other partners to promote a much-needed expansion of community justice services, starting with adequate investment.

Sport, Arts and Culture

- There is a strong understanding of the wellbeing role of both, and the benefits of having community owned assets that allow participation. They add to the identities of our communities.
- Scotland has been with very good levels of Libraries provision although now due to funding pressures we are experiencing closures and reduced hours
- As an area with little statutory direction compared this is in the frontline for 'economies' when below inflation settlements are imposed
- There is a complex interaction between ownership of assets and that most of the management is done by arms-length organisations, with some provision (sports) subsidising culture. We have significant difficulties with recruitment and retention in this area – partly because of the lower wages associated with this sector – and better pay elsewhere

Housing and Homelessness

- Scottish Councils as landlords manage a significant proportion of social housing in Scotland (1/5). It is a core service of Scottish Local Government.
- As well as being local strategic housing authorities seeking to improve supply and the overall condition of housing stock, along with the registration and licencing of private landlords across local areas.
- Scottish Councils as public bodies are also subject to obligations in relation to equalities and human rights, as well as the statutory bodies with responsibility for preventing and alleviating homelessness.
- Scottish Councils deliver vital homelessness services across the country.

Housing and Homelessness

- COSLA officers work with professional housing advisers from councils to represent Local Authorities in discussions and negotiations with the Scottish Govt on issues such as funding, new guidance and new housing legislation that impacts on LAs.
- Key areas of work for COSLA with the Scottish Govt are the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, Homelessness, Energy Efficient Housing and cost of living pressures – rent setting.
- Key challenges for Scotland's Councils highlighted recently are record levels of homelessness and a chronic lack of supply of housing due to high levels of domestic homelessness and humanitarian programmes.

Humanitarian Programmes

Resettling those fleeing war in Ukraine

- Homes For Ukraine
- Scottish Government Super Sponsor scheme
- Matching people into housing

Asylum seekers & refugees

- Working with councils to accommodate those applying for asylum
- Helping unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- Working with specific groups of refugees e.g., Syrians

Helping vulnerable migrants

Human Trafficking

- Supporting victims of trafficking and disrupting the traffickers
- Helping councils spot victims and develop policy to know what to do

Ending Destitution

- Supporting groups of migrants who are destitute, and who cannot access mainstream benefits
- Helping councils navigate complex cases and changing legislation

Changing migration patterns

Hong Kong (British National Overseas) arrivals

- The UK Government opened a new visa for those fleeing repression in Hong Kong.
- We have a Welcome Hub to facilitate their integration and arrival.

Changing population and demography

- We work with councils to understand and respond to Scotland's population challenges and demographic change

Thank you!