

RURAL GROWTH DEAL

Progress Update January 2023 – (Update No 4)

Welcome to our update

Welcome to the fourth edition of Argyll and Bute Council's Rural Growth Deal (RGD) quarterly update. Our £70 million Rural Growth Deal is about turning economic potential into a successful future for Argyll and Bute. It is about investing in initiatives that will turn the area's fantastic natural resources and business innovation into a thriving local economy.

Progress to date

February 2021 – Heads of Terms agreed with Scottish and UK Governments

October 2021 – recruitment of Programme Management Office complete.

January 2022 – Stantec appointed as consultants to progress project business cases and Levelling Up Fund Bids

August 2022 – Levelling Up Bids submitted and programme of business case work developed with Stantec and Government.

November 2022 – first draft outline business cases produced by Stantec.

Programme Management Office Update:

Financial Profile – a draft financial profile has been submitted to Government and initial feedback provided which the PMO are reviewing.

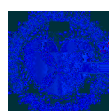
Governance Plan – submitted to Government for review and approval.

Communications Protocol – submitted to Government for review and approval.

Civil Servants from the UK Government's Cities and Local Growth Unit visited the European Marine Science Park and Oban Airport in November to discuss projects which had received funding from the Community Renewal Fund. Growth Deal projects were also discussed including the proposed UAV Hub, Marine Industry Training Centre, STEM Hubs and SAMS Seaweed Seaweed and Shellfish Industry R&D Centre;

Individual project updates

- **Marine Aquaculture Programme:**
 - Consists of 3 projects:
 - UHI Argyll College Marine Industry Training Centre (MITC);
 - SAMS International Seaweed and Shellfish Industry R&D Centre;
 - Stirling University Machrihanish Innovation Campus.
 - UHI Argyll College have submitted a draft OBC for the MITC project to the Council for comments.
 - SAMS are working with EKOS to develop the business case for the International Seaweed and Shellfish Industry R&D Centre. It is hoped that an initial draft of this will be available in the New Year.
 - Stirling University have undertaken site visits to the existing MERL facility at Machrihanish and are now developing options and an outline business case. It is hoped that there will be a draft business case available in early 2023.
 - A Blue Economy workshop between HIE, Argyll and Bute Council, North Ayrshire Council and University of Stirling was held on the 2nd of December. There are a number of clear synergies between the various deal programmes and further work will be



undertaken to maximise benefits of this work and ensure coordination of marine economy work.

- **Creating a World Class Visitor Destination:**
 - Priority locations have been identified:
 - Dunoon
 - Rothesay
 - Helensburgh
 - Ardrishaig/Crinan Canal Corridor
 - Campbeltown – Kintyre Seasports
 - Unfortunately the Council were unsuccessful in securing funding for Rothesay and Dunoon via the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund. Projects will now be designed according to budgets available via the RGD.
 - Stantec are developing a Programme Level Outline Business Case which will encompass the projects at Dunoon, Rothesay, Helensburgh and the Ardrishaig/Crinan Canal Corridor. This approach has been developed due to the synergies of these projects and the similar outcomes/impacts they hope to deliver. Each project will develop a standalone FBC once the Programme Level OBC has been agreed. Kintyre Seasports will develop its own standalone OBC due to the different timescales and different purpose of this facility.
 - Stantec are progressing stakeholder engagement workshops, with a workshop for internal stakeholders held in December. Further workshops for each priority location will take place in early 2023. This will include engagement with local elected members, external stakeholders and community groups.
 - The OBC for Kintyre Seasports is well developed. Discussions have been taking place with the Council's Procurement Team to develop the

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