



*Community Planning*  
*in East Ayrshire*  
**ECONOMY AND SKILLS**

**East Ayrshire Council  
and  
East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership Board  
Joint Performance Event: 15 September 2022**

EAST AYRSHIRE COMMUNITY PLAN 2015-2030

ECONOMY AND SKILLS DELIVERY PLAN 2021-24: PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS UPDATE

The actions in this plan have been identified to support the delivery of our shared strategic priorities for 2021-2024

AYRSHIRE GROWTH DEAL and CARING FOR AYRSHIRE

Inclusive Growth ♦ Community Wellbeing  
 Covid19 Recovery ♦ Renewal and Transformation ♦ Poverty and Inequality  
 Children and Young People ♦ Sustainability and the Environment

Action	Partnership Activity	Partners	Lead Partner Update
<p><b>ES1</b> Assist existing businesses to decarbonise and support the growth of high potential, sustainable and low carbon businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Clean Growth Workstream.</b> Development of an Energy Masterplan for Ayrshire as a basis for identifying opportunities to support the transition to new, decarbonised energy systems.</li> <li>• Work with <b>Zero Waste Scotland</b> to provide advice to businesses on district heating, waste heat recovery and industrial decarbonisation opportunities.</li> <li>• Ayrshire Growth Deal - <b>Community Renewable Energy (CoRE) Project.</b> Establish a business support scheme with the assistance of CoRE to support local companies develop expertise in renewable and green energy technology.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; SE; UWS; AC; businesses.</p> <p>EAC; SE; Business Gateway; ZWS; businesses.</p> <p>EAC; SE; Strathclyde University; AC; businesses.</p>	<p>Approval has been granted to proceed with the development of an Energy Masterplan for Ayrshire for investment in energy infrastructure. The project will be funded by the three Councils, UWS and SE, and the Council and UWS with tender documents issued to the market at the end of August 2022. The Plan's scope will include assessing energy demand, identification of energy sources, development of a strategic energy vision, techno-economic evaluation of options, scenario modelling and reporting of proposed technical solutions.</p> <p>Zero Waste Scotland offers support to local businesses to help develop a more circular economy by delivering tailored, one to one support to small and medium sized businesses in all sectors. Upon completion of the service, actions recommended to businesses may be eligible for funding via a Circular Economy Development Grant.</p> <p>The Community Wealth Building (CWB) grant was launched to allow businesses access to funding for a range of purposes, including making the transition to renewable energy. Within East Ayrshire Council, work is underway to assist businesses to access support from University of Strathclyde for Carbon Management Plans and subsequent funding to implement recommendations. Council colleagues are collaborating on the development of a business support scheme. As part of the Climate Change Strategy, £100,000 grant support is being provided to businesses to assist to migrate towards net zero activities.</p>

<p><b>ES2</b> Deliver new opportunities for apprenticeships across a range of emerging growth sectors, including 'green apprenticeships', which will help us to deliver on our net zero carbon aspirations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Green Jobs Fund.</b> CPP needs to align itself to take full advantage of this to support recovery and renewal.</li> <li>• <b>Ayrshire Growth Deal – all projects.</b> Ayrshire College, EAC and private sector work together to identify green apprenticeship opportunities during both construction and delivery phases.</li> <li>• <b>Skills and training.</b> Ensure that our skills and training packages are linked to emerging opportunities within the green economy, and that sustainability is embedded within course content. Ensure the development of skills from early years, through primary and secondary education, connect learners with the world of work and future career aspirations.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; SE; AC; SDS; businesses.</p> <p>AC; EAC; businesses.</p> <p>AC; EAC; SDS; universities; businesses.</p>	<p>The Scottish Government announced the establishment of a £100m Green Jobs Fund in 2021. Partners are investigating ways to provide our young people with the skills and experience for work in environmentally and socially sustainable jobs, sectors and economies.</p> <p>With support from the University of Glasgow and additional funding from SE, an Inclusive Growth Action Plan has been developed, ensuring that the best inclusive growth outcomes are delivered, linking the opportunities created by the AGD to local residents and businesses. This includes green apprenticeship opportunities.</p> <p>Ongoing discussions with Ayrshire College and private sector on opportunities. Workshop session to be undertaken which will also include Energy Skills Partnership and Energy Systems Catapult.</p> <p>The Construction Technology &amp; Trades curriculum at Ayrshire College has been revised and developed from academic year 2022-23 to incorporate sustainability into all courses. This contributes to a curriculum fit for purpose and in accordance with skills needs identified through national, regional and local priorities.</p> <p>The Wind Turbine Technician Course continues to provide a skills pipeline for the industry with apprentices and students leaving this full-time course with industry standard Global Wind Organisation approved qualifications.</p> <p>The Head of Learning and Skills for this area is a member of the Renewable Energy Employment Task Group in East Ayrshire.</p> <p>All motor vehicle courses at Kilmarnock Campus will incorporate Low and Ultra Low Emission Vehicle training. Plans are underway to deliver upskilling courses in this area for local employers.</p> <p>Investment has been made in setting up a renewable energy training and assessment centre in the Ayr Campus to provide opportunities for apprentices and employers.</p>
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<p><b>ES3</b> Deliver on Scotland's 2030 net zero carbon commitment by investing in the re-use of vacant and derelict land, forestry and woodland planting, peatland renewal, clean energy and transport, and digital technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all our public buildings are compliant with the new Climate Change (Scotland) Act's <b>Net Zero Carbon Standards</b> (date TBC).</li> </ul>	<p>ALL</p>	<p>Partners continue to embed flexible working practices, which is helping to reduce the size of the overall buildings estate. Retrofitting of existing buildings is ongoing across the Partnership, with the adoption of new building standards and where possible, a migration from natural gas heating to zero direct emission heating to mitigate the increased operational energy costs.</p> <p>Ayrshire College has established a Sustainability Strategy Group. The Group's membership includes representation from across all areas of the College. This ensures that examples of good practice can be rolled out to other areas within the College and to raise awareness of sustainability. The Sustainability Strategy Group is overseeing the College's work to achieve its commitment to become net-zero. This includes setting targets for progression and understanding the costs involved.</p> <p>A large-scale tree planting programme within East Ayrshire is being led by the Council's Greener Communities service, with 200 trees planted across the area. Rewilding areas and wild flower meadows continue to be introduced in conjunction with community groups.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put in place plans to replace all petrol and diesel vehicles from the <b>public sector fleet</b> by 2030.</li> <li>Develop the infrastructure for <b>electric vehicle charging</b> across EA.</li> <li><b>Ayrshire Growth Deal – Community Renewable Energy (CoRE) Project</b> Testing and trialling of new technologies and use of low carbon technologies for powering and heating homes.</li> <li><b>Housing to 2040</b> - work towards achieving the vision of a well-functioning housing system, the provision of high quality, sustainable homes, sustainable communities and access to homes that meet people’s needs by adopting a place-based approach.</li> </ul>	<p>ALL</p> <p>EAC/ARA</p> <p>EAC; AC; universities; community groups.</p> <p>EAC; ARA; HSCP; community groups.</p>	<p>Partners are making good progress towards the electrification of their vehicle fleets by 2030. Reviews of fleet requirements will continue to take place.</p> <p>ARA produced an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan which will develop a widespread electric vehicle charging network, identify and provide solutions where no off-road parking exists and work on solutions to improve air quality.</p> <p>The UK and Scottish Governments approved the Outline Business Case for the CoRE project in March 2022 and the Project Team are now preparing the Final Business Case. CoRE (Community Renewable Energy Project) is an innovative renewables project in Cumnock which will build on the area’s natural resources in order to provide a self-sustaining network of low cost energy from renewable sources such as wind, solar, geo-thermal and hydro.</p> <p>Local community workshops and business engagement workshops were held to raise awareness of CoRE. The Project Team are now developing governance processes for Demonstrator Projects and will communicate opportunities for joint projects to the community. The intention is to commence feasibility of early demonstrator projects from the end of 2022.</p> <p>The ambitious plans detailed within Housing to 2040 set out to place housing firmly at the centre of other national objectives such as tackling poverty and inequality, creating and supporting jobs, ensuring local authorities meet energy efficiency and fuel poverty targets, tackling the climate emergency and ensuring that people have connected, cohesive and vibrant communities in which to live.</p> <p>Housing to 2040 will drive forward innovation and change within all areas of Housing in East Ayrshire and inform the strategic direction of the service as set out within the Local Housing Strategy 2019-2024.</p>
<p><b>ES4</b> Form strategic relationships with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of <b>flood risk management schemes</b> in appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; ARA; SEPA; Scottish Water;</p>	<p>The Council have been working with the Key Agencies Group (KAG) and a range of other stakeholders towards managing the impacts of climate change and flood risk in Kilmarnock, most recently in</p>

<p>SEPA, Scottish Government and other partners to fully examine the issue of flood risk and associated implications for our communities, including our town centres.</p>	<p>locations, based on results of flood study work.</p>	<p>Community councils</p>	<p>February 2022. This followed the earlier August 2021 workshop where a ‘whole place’ collaborative was initiated. The group will continue work to maintain the current momentum of a place-based approach to managing flood risk including ‘blue green’ infrastructure. Particular emphasis will be placed on evolving a consolidated masterplan linked to specific flood management interventions with quantified benefits and known residual risks, allowing the regeneration of Kilmarnock town centre and South Central Kilmarnock. This work needs to further test both upstream and downstream interventions arising from the KAG workshops, to quantify benefits in terms of land released for development and then to evolve the Ryden/ASL framework design options.</p> <p>Work is currently underway to produce the next six yearly cyclical Local Flood Risk Management Plan 2022-28 in conjunction with SEPA and Scottish Water, and this is reflected in the newly emerging Local Development Plan. This plan will outline a range of actions to reduce and mitigate against identified flood risks.</p>
<p><b>ES5</b> Invest in new, sustainable transport infrastructure that improves the transport network and accessibility, particularly in our rural communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued development of the <b>Active Travel Strategy</b>, ensuring alignment with the National Transport Strategy.</li> <li>• <b>Ayrshire Growth Deal – CoRE project.</b> Low carbon solutions for transport, including new cycle routes and paths.</li> <li>• <b>Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2).</b> Ayrshire &amp; Arran Regional Working Group established. Number of themes identified, including ‘supporting smart and sustainable travel’.</li> </ul>	<p>ARA; EAC; SPT; EALT</p> <p>EAC; ARA; EALT; community groups.</p> <p>ARA; EAC; AGD; SPT</p>	<p>ARA has prepared a draft East Ayrshire Active Travel Strategy and associated 10 year action plan, following a period of public and stakeholder engagement, which ran for 6 weeks from 26 October 2021. The Strategy will provide a holistic approach to the promotion of active travel in East Ayrshire through a combination of behaviour change initiatives and new or enhanced infrastructure.</p> <p>Governance process for progressing projects are currently being developed to allow for potential projects to be appraised and cost benefit analysis undertaken to direct recommended projects to be taken forward. The sustainability of the operational model for CoRE is being developed and once agreed the final business case (FBC) will be considered by the Ayrshire Joint Economic Committee.</p> <p>The Scottish Government published its draft report in January 2022, following a detailed options appraisal by Transport Scotland in 2021. Publication of the draft report allowed stakeholders the opportunity to comment during a statutory 12 week consultation period. The Regional Transport Working Group, which includes East Ayrshire Council, submitted their consultation response in April 2022.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the transport infrastructure at the <b>Bellfield Interchange</b> to identify constraints and proposals to increase the capacity of the roundabout to enhance economic activity within Ayrshire.</li> </ul>	EAC; ARA	<p>STPR2 recommends that safety, resilience and reliability improvements are made on the A75 and A77 strategic road corridors, given the strategic importance of both the A75 and A77 in connecting the UK &amp; Ireland. The response highlighted access to Stranraer and ports at Cairnryan and A70 &amp; A71 which links both Authorities with the M74 providing a strategic route for freight traffic to and from Ayrshire including Glasgow Prestwick Airport. The improvements would help to enable AGD projects.</p> <p>The Council's new Strategic Plan 2022-27 sets out to invest in new, sustainable public transport infrastructure that improves the transport network, public transport and accessibility, particularly in rural communities.</p> <p>The transport appraisal for LDP2 reviews the capacity and safety concerns at the Bellfield Interchange and suggests a range of improvements and mitigation options.</p> <p>ARA has developed options for improvements to the Bellfield Interchange to cater for increased traffic volumes and deliver safety improvements. The preferred option is to introduce signalling and increase the road width to include a third lane by reducing the size of the hard verges and construct a separate pedestrian/cycle bridge adjacent to the junction to improve connectivity.</p> <p>Now that in principle solutions have been proposed, a feasibility study will be undertaken, including ground investigation works, a topographical survey and environmental impact/ecology surveys.</p> <p>To support proposals, an application was submitted to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund in August 2022.</p>
<p><b>ES6</b> Enable local businesses to take advantage of public sector procurement opportunities, helping to increase their</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Project.</b> Appointment of CWB Business Locality Officers to work closely with local businesses and assist them to bid for AGD and other public sector contracts and increase business opportunities within Ayrshire.</li> </ul>	EAC; SE; SDS; Fair Work Ayrshire; EACVO.	<p>The CWB project now has a full complement of staff, including CWB Manager, Locality Officers and Fair Work Officers. Locality Officers are engaging with local businesses by providing 1-1 support, holding CWB pillar focused workshops across localities and providing financial assistance via the CWB Fund.</p> <p>In line with the regional nature of this project CWB officers are working to deliver on the specific outputs and outcomes contained</p>

<p>competitiveness nationally and internationally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support inclusive growth by <b>harnessing CPP (anchor organisation) spending power</b> in terms of buying from local or socially progressive businesses.</li> </ul> <p>Exploration of <b>collaborative and joint capital funding ventures</b> across the CPP. One such opportunity has been identified through the forthcoming Doon Valley Community Campus development in Dalmellington, which will be taken forward collaboratively with a range of partners including EAC Education, NHSAA, Health and Social Care Partnership and East Ayrshire Leisure Trust.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>	<p>within the project business case and support businesses to apply for procurement contracts.</p> <p>CPP partners have endorsed a commitment to support local businesses via supply chain contracts. Our collective activities will seek to prioritise and extend every opportunity to strengthen Net Zero, local value and the just transition in all areas of procurement. In doing so, partners are optimising collaborative opportunities which, ultimately, makes it easier for local and smaller businesses to bid for contracts, such as local food producers. This work is being progressed across anchor institutions by the Community Wealth Building Commission.</p> <p>The initially agreed budget of £33.5m was increased by the Council in June 2022, bringing the overall budget for the Doon Valley project to £41.5m. The increase is due to a number of factors: rising costs in the construction sector, an expansion in the size of the facility and inflationary pressures. Following discussions with partners including NHS Ayrshire &amp; Arran and Police Scotland, the decision taken by the Council's Cabinet means the project can now advance to the next stage and detailed plans can be developed. Further design development and community engagement has recommenced.</p>
<p><b>ES7</b> Provide a range of tailored support packages to nurture and develop the capacity of our businesses to grow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of a number of <b>sector specific recovery groups</b> (Food &amp; Drink, Visitor Economy, Clean Growth, Digital, Aerospace, Business, Skills and CWB).</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; SE; AC; universities; VS; SDS.</p>	<p>Sector-specific recovery groups, made up of a range of key stakeholders and including industry representatives, have been established in each of the key sectors, are meeting regularly and making an important contribution to assist in the recovery process. Each group have developed their own medium to long term recovery plans and report regularly to the Ayrshire Economic Partnership. Recognising the degree of crossover and shared objectives, the groups work together on a collaborative basis where appropriate.</p> <p>As part of ongoing educational reform and curriculum developments, the Council's Education Service will continue to work locally and nationally in terms of the roll-out of further meaningful qualifications in this area, with the Foundation Apprenticeship in Loudoun</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review of existing business support model</b> in Ayrshire, to ensure that the same level of support is provided to businesses regardless of their location.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ayrshire Growth Deal - Ayrshire Manufacturing Investment Corridor (AMIC).</b> Establishment of a Centre of Excellence with on-site support and start-up units to support existing or new businesses adopt advanced manufacturing technology within the food and drink sector.</p>	<p>EAC; NAC; SAC; SE.</p> <p>EAC; SE; Strathclyde University; AC; SDS.</p>	<p>Academy already showing great progress in the Food and Drink sector to aid recovery efforts.</p> <p>A review of governance arrangements in relation to regional economic development in Ayrshire is currently being carried out. As a result, a number of changes have been proposed which are designed to enhance delivery, strengthen partnership working arrangements and provide greater accountability. These proposals are currently in draft and require to be approved by the Ayrshire Joint Economic Committee.</p> <p>Good progress has been made, with a preferred site having been identified for the Centre of Excellence and access being taken for site investigations. Detailed design development work is underway. The Project Team are continuing to progress phase 1 of the project to provide food and drink sector specific support (include themed workshops and webinars).</p>
<p><b>ES8</b> Attract more private sector investment into East Ayrshire, providing projects that generate jobs and wealth for our communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of <b>Regional Economic Strategy</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Regional Economic Partnership</b> will provide voice for Ayrshire to press the case for government intervention and investment, incentives and other assistance to complement the AGD.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; NAC; SAC; AC; SE.</p> <p>EAC; NAC; SAC; AC; SE.</p> <p>EAC; SE.</p>	<p>The Regional Economic Strategy Group have appointed consultants to prepare a Regional Economic Strategy which aligns with Community Wealth Building principles and the Scottish Government's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET). The development of the Strategy is being overseen by the Ayrshire Economic Strategic Group. Indicatively, it is anticipated that the final Strategy and associated Action Plan will be completed in the second half of 2022. Progress against key aims and objectives will be monitored regularly by the Regional Economic Partnership.</p> <p>The REP continued to meet regularly during 2021/22 and worked closely alongside both UK and Scottish Governments on a number of matters relating to Covid recovery and the AGD. Delivery of the AGD will be framed through a Community Wealth Building approach that seeks to harness assets, resources, community strength and relationships within Ayrshire to develop improved outcomes for our communities.</p> <p>The Council agreed and approved the purchase of land in March 2022. Details of the purchase are being finalised, whilst</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ayrshire Growth Deal - Ayrshire Engineering Park (Moorfield Phase 3).</b> Provision of high-quality industrial premises for engineering and manufacturing companies to assist the expansion of the existing engineering base and attract inward investment.</li> </ul>		<p>masterplanning and detailed design work is undertaken. A pre-application planning submission was submitted to the Council's Planning Service in May 2022 and a subsequent planning application will be submitted later this year.</p>
<p><b>ES9</b> Provide specific innovation and entrepreneurial skills to support emerging growth sectors via skills partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Regional Skills Investment Plan</b> will be published in 2022, setting out the demand for skills and people in Ayrshire over the short and medium-term, and will highlight what skills priorities are needed to support economic development and the AGD projects.</li> <li>• <b>Ayrshire Growth Deal - HALO Kilmarnock.</b> Enterprise and Innovation Hub scheduled to open in April 2021. This will establish an 'entrepreneurial ecosystem' to stimulate innovative business practices between new and established businesses and link with the existing Business and Employability Support provided by the Council to create the opportunity for an employability pipeline.</li> <li>• <b>Ayrshire Growth Deal – Ayrshire Skills Fund (ASIF).</b> £3.5 million has been allocated to establish a responsive skills fund to drive Inclusive Growth to</li> </ul>	<p>AC; SDS; UWS; RES Skills Group</p> <p>EAC; SE; AC; SDS; UWS.</p> <p>EAC; AC; SE; SDS</p>	<p>External consultants were appointed to support the development of the RSIP and a draft report was received from them in January 2022. Further refinement of the Plan subsequently took place to ensure alignment with the proposals for the Ayrshire Skills Fund, wider AGD and Regional Economic Strategy (currently in development) with skills a central focus across the sector themes. The final RSIP 2022-25 was approved by the Joint Economic Committee in June 2022.</p> <p>The Enterprise and Innovation Hub at the HALO Kilmarnock opened its doors to its first occupants in January 2022 and its HALO #Rockme Enterprise Floor opened in March 2022. The centre will create an industry-leading entrepreneurial accelerator for business growth concentrating on the green economy. The HALO is also creating a cyber and digital learning training facility that will support SMEs.</p> <p>HALO Kilmarnock won the award for Best Regeneration Project at the Scottish Property Awards in March 2022, in recognition for the transformation which took place at a derelict site via the delivery of a mixed-use property development with a net zero carbon footprint.</p> <p>The Council's Education and Employability service continue to discuss plans to connect and embed the HALO project into pupil experiences and learning.</p> <p>North Ayrshire Council is leading on the development of proposals for the Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund, which will complement the Regional Skills Investment Plan and address gaps in funding for skills. The operational business case was approved by the Ayrshire</p>

	<p>support skills interventions and associated management costs. The fund will have core themes including digital skills; in-work progression; route ways into Fair Work for excluded groups; skills support for inward investors; skills support for redundant workers; skills support aligned to AGD projects to ensure residents benefit; responses to demand identified in Regional Skills Assessment and capacity building for innovation in skills sector.</p>		<p>Joint Economic Committee in June 2022, with implementation of the Fund expected to commence in December 2022.</p> <p>The ASIF will provide a flexible and responsive skills fund for Ayrshire's businesses and residents. It is aimed at helping employers grow and develop their employees and increase skills for Ayrshire residents, linking them to growth sectors and employment opportunities, with the objectives of reducing unemployment and increasing productivity.</p>
<p><b>ES10</b> Support social enterprises and the third sector to provide facilities and employment, and deliver inclusive growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Establish and implement the Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building project.</b> Key actions include the stimulation of social entrepreneurship, the development of social, family owned and employee-owned and co-operative enterprises and the promotion of opportunities for employee ownership.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; SE; SDS; Fair Work Ayrshire; EACVO.</p>	<p>The Ayrshire CWB Anchor Charter Annual Review was carried out in late 2021, covering the year since the Anchor Charter was launched (October 2020 – September 2021). This demonstrated the good progress which has been made in relation to the 'plural ownership of the economy' pillar.</p> <p>Looking ahead, the CWB project in East Ayrshire will support 5 businesses transition to employee ownership or co-operatives and encourage the development of the social business sector with more opportunities for procurement and increased collaboration.</p>
<p><b>ES11</b> Work with employers to ensure that opportunities created locally adhere to the principles of Fair Work, including payment of the Living Wage and high standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building project.</b> £3 million has been allocated to take forward specific work streams, of which Fair Work is an integral part. Dedicated Fair Work Ayrshire team currently being recruited.</li> <li>• <b>Living Wage accreditation.</b> CPP commitment for their respective organisations to become Living Wage employers.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; SE; SDS; Fair Work Ayrshire; CVOEA.</p> <p>ALL</p>	<p>The new Fair Work Ayrshire Programme Manager and two additional Fair Work advisors have been recruited. The initial focus of the Manager is on agreeing the operating principles for the engagement of local business via the three Councils. Engagement with local businesses commenced in December 2021. The Programme's official launch gathering took place in June 2022.</p> <p>49 companies and organisations across East Ayrshire are listed as accredited Living Wage employers on the Living Wage Scotland employer database.</p> <p>The Council became an accredited Living Wage Employer in April 2020 and actively promotes the Living Wage via press releases and social media. Ayrshire College was one of 22 signatory colleges that received Living Wage accreditation in October 2021. Other</p>

			Living Wage Employers include Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.
<b>ES12</b> Invest in town centres to encourage the return of visitors, and reimagine our vacant shops and public buildings as housing, business or community space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued promotion of the <b>EA Virtual Mall</b> and <b>EA Gift Card</b> sales.</li> <li>Accelerate delivery of capital works and <b>infrastructure projects</b> to support growth in housing, business and activity within our town centres throughout the day and evening.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC</p> <p>EAC; EALT; CVOEA; KBA; Ayrshire Chamber</p>	<p>The Council was recognised at the 2021 Scotland Loves Local Awards, receiving the Judges' Special Award for the EA Gift Card. In March 2022, 203 local businesses were signed up to the scheme, compared to 80 at its launch in August 2020. The card works on ShopAppy, a virtual high street for East Ayrshire businesses.</p> <p>Over the past year, there has been a 46% increase in the number of people purchasing individual gift cards and a 40% rise in company rewards. During the Pandemic, we also used the card to deliver much needed support to families. Feedback showed that this was a great boost for them and local businesses, particularly those offering food and clothing.</p> <p>Good progress is being made on a number of construction sites, including Crosshouse Primary School and Communication Centre, Netherthird Primary School, early Childhood Centres at Dunlop, Catrine, Fenwick and Dalmellington, new housing at Witch Road and Bellevue Gardens, Kilmarnock and the restoration of Dean Castle.</p> <p>11 of the Council's 17 Town Centre Regeneration Fund projects have now been completed, with the remaining 6 in the final stages of development. Projects supported include The Corner in Darvel; The Castle in New Cumnock, Morton Hall in Newmilns; the White Tile Building in Kilmarnock and new art installations in Auchinleck.</p> <p>Aligned with the Council's recovery and renewal priorities, the Capital Programme includes £46 million for a range of projects in Kilmarnock town centre. Work is underway across Council services to explore opportunities for a more collaborative, place-based approach to Kilmarnock town centre, with a shared purpose to support a clear masterplan for all services, assets and investments linking to the Kilmarnock Town Centre Framework.</p>
<b>ES13</b> As anchor organisations, design and build local economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners have signed up to the <b>Ayrshire CWB Anchor Charter</b> and are working towards achievement of the aims underpinning its 6 pillars.</li> </ul>	EAC; NHSAA; SE; Ayrshire Community Trust	East Ayrshire Council, Scottish Enterprise, Ayrshire College and NHS Ayrshire and Arran are amongst the signatories to the Ayrshire CWB Anchor Charter. Each organisation is committed to the embedding of CWB principles and a Year 1 progress report, which

<p>and community wealth building solutions in conjunction with local people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise the impact of <b>combined partnership resources</b> in support of CWB.</li> <li>• Ayrshire Growth Deal: a <b>regional community benefits tracker</b> has been developed to monitor the delivery of community benefits and capture CWB pledges.</li> </ul>	<p>ALL</p> <p>AGD PMO, EAC</p>	<p>provided evidence of progress against each of the 6 pillars, was provided to the CWB Commission in early 2022.</p> <p>The pledges set out in the CWB Anchor Charter are helping to focus and direct the activities of anchor organisations, particularly in relation to regional workstream activities across procurement, fair employment and land and assets. The monitoring process has also helped anchors to better understand each other, their strengths and challenges, and where added value via collaboration can take place.</p> <p>NHS Ayrshire &amp; Arran, as an Anchor Organisation, has been considering its strategic intent and established an internal CWB/NHS Anchor Programme Board which includes key personnel.</p> <p>Partners have adopted a single mechanism to monitor the delivery of community benefits across Ayrshire. Project leads complete Equality Impact Assessments for their projects. Consideration being given to the creation of targets for the number of jobs being filled from priority groups (young people, females, those with long-term health issues and people experiencing poverty).</p>
<p><b>ES14</b> Work alongside our communities to deliver Placemaking and Local Place Plans which set out proposals for development of land and assets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newmilns, Catrine &amp; Ochiltree <b>Placemaking Plans</b> complete. NW Kilmarnock, Cumnock and Dalrymple awaiting approval. 6 others in early development.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; community groups.</p>	<p>Dalrymple, Skeldon Mills and Hollybush and Cumnock Placemaking Plans were adopted in 2020. The North West Kilmarnock Plan was consulted upon in 2020 and is expected to be presented to Cabinet in 2022 after a series of changes. Work on Mauchline, Auchinleck, Kilmaurs and Darvel and Priestland Placemaking Plans is underway.</p> <p>Other plans are programmed in the Development Plan Scheme for 2023 and 2024. The timetable is subject to change and dependent on both the willingness of communities to get involved and the work of the Council's Vibrant Communities team, which is working with communities to prepare Community-led Action Plans.</p>
<p><b>ES15</b> Strengthen community led regeneration through the development of community led action plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer communities the opportunity to create their first <b>community led action plans</b> to reflect local priorities and support other communities to develop second generation five year plans.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; community groups.</p>	<p>East Ayrshire Council continues to support local communities to develop action plans for their own areas. There are currently 22 Community Led Action Plans throughout the local authority area and another 6 updates from communities under development.</p> <p>Community power will be key to the area's ongoing recovery and renewal. The last two years have been characterised by a huge</p>

			<p>increase in volunteering and mutual aid in response to the pandemic. There have been many examples of community power in action and moving forward, partners aim to strengthen this via community-led regeneration, participatory budgeting and community asset transfer.</p>
<p><b>ES16</b> Adapt the provision of employability services and provide re-training and upskilling opportunities for people whose work or learning has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and for those most at risk of poverty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review the number of partnership groups and project boards</b> established in East Ayrshire to support employability.</li>   <li>• Support applications to the UK Government's <b>Levelling Up Fund and Community Renewal Fund</b>, and ensure that Partnership resources are mobilised to take advantage of new investments in skills.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; DWP; SDS; SE; AC</p> <p>ALL</p>	<p>To support the strategic work of the Local Employability Partnership and to ensure oversight, consistency and synergy across the Council's employability pipeline, an Employability Project Board has been set up to progress internal arrangements within the Council. The Board considers monthly progress updates on all issues relating to the employability pipeline, seeks to co-ordinate and maximise resources to better support the LEP and helps to avoid duplication.</p> <p>Skills and Learning 33 (SL33), the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Partnership Hub, is a purpose built space designed to progress the delivery and implementation of DYW in East Ayrshire. Supported by partners including DWP, SDS and East Ayrshire Council, the specially designed space ensures the provision of a refreshed and expanded resource to support young people in the development of employability skills. It has classrooms and vocational spaces including a hair and beauty space and creative arts and design space, which were designed in consultation with young people and partners.</p> <p>In November 2021, the UK Government confirmed that four of the seven bids made by East Ayrshire Council (as lead authority) to the Community Renewal Fund had been successful: East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, Enable Scotland, Auchinleck Community Development Initiative and New Cumnock Development Trust.</p> <p>Levelling Up Fund applications for Bellfield Interchange and Cultural Kilmarnock were prepared by the Council during 2021/22, and will be submitted to the UK Government by the scheduled August 2022 deadline. Preparations are also being made for the submission of a bid for the Doon Valley Masterplan for 2023/24.</p> <p>The prospectus for the Shared Prosperity Fund was published in April 2022, and the Council has commenced the preparation of a detailed Investment Plan setting out key priorities. SPF funding is</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the over-25s to take up a range of opportunities, including the <b>National Transition Training Fund</b> as an integral part of our economic recovery.</li> </ul>	AC; SDS	<p>designed to replace EU funding, which will be terminated in East Ayrshire during 2023.</p> <p>A new Long-Term Unemployment (LTU) scheme, funded by the Scottish Government in response to the economic impact of the pandemic, was launched to boost employment opportunities and enhance skills of East Ayrshire residents. This pathway will assist eligible individuals to progress and move into sustainable employment. The scheme is being delivered by the Council as part of the 'No One Left Behind' initiative and aims to supporting those aged over 25 years who are experiencing LTU. Individuals will get support to develop employability skills and valuable work experience.</p> <p>East Ayrshire was awarded £600,000 in 2021/22 with a further allocation of £600,000 being made for 2022/23. This equates to 120 funded placements in total over 2 years based on a unit cost of £10,000 per candidate. To date, 35 eligible individuals are in work placements across East Ayrshire, all of whom are employed within the third sector, with the exception of 1 who is employed within the Council. A further 90 places are available. 30 of these remaining 90 must start in post prior to the end of September 2022 with the remaining 60 placements required to start before 31 March 2023.</p> <p>Ayrshire College Community Team work with all external agencies to deliver bespoke programmes for their clients including over-25s. This includes work with Patchwork and WG13.</p> <p>NHS Ayrshire and Arran developed an Employability Strategy with priorities such as social inclusion providing opportunity to focus resource on lone parents, people involved in the justice system and people in care to develop skills and confidence in entering employment through different pathways.</p>
<p><b>ES17</b> Reduce the incidence of ill health and fuel poverty as a constraint to an inclusive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ayrshire Growth Deal – Working for a Healthy Economy.</b> £5 million investment in occupational health services with a specific emphasis on health related barriers to labour</li> </ul>	NHSAA; DWP; EAC.	<p>The Working for a Healthy Economy project moved into its delivery phase in 2021/22 and provides targeted interventions and support to help those struggling to maintain secure employment. Since project launch in May 2021, 285 individuals (263 unemployed and 22 employed) have engaged with the Service across Ayrshire. Of the clients completing the service to date, there has been a 23%</p>

<p>economy for individuals and businesses</p>	<p>market participation. Project will be delivered by NHS Salus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ayrshire Growth Deal – CoRE.</b> Reduce fuel poverty through implementation of CoRE demonstrator projects including advanced retrofit technologies.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; SE; Strathclyde University; AC.</p>	<p>improvement in overall health and wellbeing. Additional referral routes are being developed to increase numbers across Ayrshire.</p> <p>Governance process for progressing demonstrator projects are being developed to allow potential projects to be appraised and cost benefit analysis undertaken to direct recommended projects to be taken forward. Discussions are underway with the Council's Heads of Service and businesses on potential demonstrator projects.</p>
<p><b>ES18</b> Tackle digital exclusion to promote equality, counter social isolation and unlock access to education, healthcare and employment opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise the impact of digital poverty and ensure there is a <b>focus on digital access, literacy, numeracy and inter-personal skills</b> via community-based learning for all age groups.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; AC; EALT; NHSAA; Third Sector.</p>	<p>Ayrshire College's Digital Poverty Group has ensured that all students have access to a device and appropriate connectivity. Currently an options appraisal is being reviewed to take the project forward and ensure commercial viability. Demand for data centre storage is also being investigated. Proposals will be presented to the Ayrshire Regional Economic Partnership.</p> <p>The EA Digital Access Network brings together a range of local and national organisations with the aim of promoting digital inclusion and equality and was the driving force behind the Scottish Government funded Connecting Scotland Programme in East Ayrshire. To date, almost 1,500 East Ayrshire families have benefitted from the Programme, which has opened up new opportunities for the digitally excluded, helping them to get online and learn new skills via the provision of a device, connectivity and Digital Champion support.</p> <p>Vibrant Communities continue to provide a range of supports to adults, parents, children and families, including family and youth literacy learning and parental engagement sessions via the Scottish Attainment Challenge.</p> <p>The Council's Education Service has continued to focus on digital poverty and is providing IT equipment to pupils and families. In line with educational reform, a significant number of courses, mainly at Advanced Higher, now include a significant online component, which is likely to be replicated in university and college curriculum.</p> <p>Recognising that a number of projects were rolled out to mitigate against digital poverty during the pandemic, and particularly within</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ayrshire Growth Deal – Digital Infrastructure Project.</b> Complete 4G coverage for rural Ayrshire. Overall aim – make Ayrshire a world-class digitally connected region.</li> </ul>	EAC; SE; private sector.	<p>school settings, work is taking place to identify new and emerging needs and to review the sustainability of the earlier efforts.</p> <p>Proposals have been submitted to the UK Government’s Shared Prosperity Fund via the East Ayrshire Investment Plan. Multiply is a stand-alone programme which is designed to increase levels of numeracy across the adult population. Under this heading, a range of partners including Ayrshire College and the Council will deliver two projects: the Money MOT programme and Financial Inclusion Pathways.</p> <p>A reformed Digital Oversight Group has been established, comprising representatives from the 3 councils, Project Management Office, UK and Scottish Governments to progress the AGD projects with a REP Digital Workstream developing an Ayrshire Digital Strategy. Further development of the appraisal is required prior to consideration by the Ayrshire Joint Economic Committee.</p>
<p><b>ES19</b> Support all our businesses through recovery from Covid-19 and the UK’s departure from the EU, and into a longer-term renewal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPP to develop links and work together with the Ayrshire-wide <b>sector-specific recovery groups.</b></li> <li>• Assist in the co-ordination and integration of individual partners’ <b>Brexit preparedness plans</b> and ensure integration as they continue to evolve.</li> </ul>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>	<p>The sector-specific recovery groups continue to work with a wide range of partners in pursuit of their objectives. Each group has its own detailed action plan, and whilst these are tailored depending on the needs of the sector, common themes have emerged, including sustainability, economic growth and digitalisation. CPP partners are major employers within East Ayrshire, and have a crucial role to play in ensuring the success of the sector-specific activity.</p> <p>The UK’s withdrawal from the EU will have an impact on local communities, the provision of goods and services, supply chains, the economy, business survival and the Council’s financial position. It is recognised that any impact is likely to be exacerbated by the concurrent impacts relating to the Covid-19 pandemic and other civic emergencies, with consequent impacts on organisational capacity.</p> <p>Ayrshire College established a Brexit Steering Group to ensure the organisation was ready for the impacts of Brexit. The College used the British Chamber of Commerce’s Business Brexit Checklist to identify key areas for action. The areas within the checklist were assigned to relevant strategic leads for action. Progress and updates on the checklist were overseen by the Steering Group.</p>

<p><b>ES20</b> Invest in hospitality and tourism as part of economic recovery from Covid-19 and reposition East Ayrshire as a destination for responsible tourism in alignment with national and pan-Ayrshire tourism strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of new Ayrshire-wide <b>Tourism Strategic Group</b> and Covid-19 Recovery Road Map.</li> </ul>	<p>VisitScotland; EAC; EALT; SAC; NAC; SE; Ayrshire CofC; the Coig; Scottish Tourism Alliance.</p>	<p>VisitScotland continues to work strategically with key partners in East Ayrshire and across the wider Ayrshire region as part of tourism recovery. The Ayrshire Visitor Economy Strategy Group is chaired by Malcolm Roughead, CEO, VisitScotland. The new strategy will be aligned to Outlook 2030, the national tourism strategy and the Regional Economic Partnership and will be presented to the Joint Committee in November 2022.</p> <p>Via VisitScotland Destination &amp; Sector Marketing Fund, financial support has been given to the creation of 2 marketing campaigns. Both Ayrshire &amp; Arran Destination Alliance “Find Your Balance” and Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce’s Food &amp; Drink themed campaign work have been created to attract visits to Ayrshire over autumn, winter and spring 2021/22.</p> <p>VisitScotland has led on the development of Scotland’s UNESCO Trail. Scotland is the first country in the world to bring together 13 UNESCO sites including Galloway &amp; Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere into one trail. <a href="https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/unesco-trail/">https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/unesco-trail/</a> A dedicated marketing campaign will be delivered from June 2022.</p> <p>Discover Scotland: Reconnect 2022 is part of VisitScotland’s activity to rebuild international tourism and support the country’s ambition to be a leading destination for responsible tourism. Tourism businesses engaged with tour operators, travel advisors and Destination Management Companies to drive bookings from international visitors. 7 Ayrshire &amp; Arran businesses attended the event including Ayrshire &amp; Arran Destination Alliance (which is the newly formed business led tourism group).</p> <p>Tourism businesses are being encouraged to participate in the ScotSpirit Holiday Voucher Scheme supporting unpaid carers and low-income families to take a funded break up until December 2022. There are currently 11 businesses registered for the scheme across Ayrshire &amp; Arran.</p> <p>As part of the Destination Net Zero activity, VisitScotland and key partners are delivering funding support for tourism operators across</p>
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			Scotland through Electric Vehicle Charge Point Tourism Recovery Fund and Sustainability Certification Fund for Tourism Recovery.
<p><b>ES21</b> Accelerate the transformation of key digital public services, recognising the transformation that has taken place as a result of Covid-19.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise learning and good practice from the pandemic to deepen <b>collaboration and partnership working</b>, and strengthen place and systems-based working across East Ayrshire.</li> <li>Invest in <b>sustainable and resilient workforces</b> through recovery, learning from Covid-19 to embed flexible working, promote wellbeing and develop new ways of working.</li> </ul>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>	<p>The CPP developed a revised strategic work plan in February 2022, which strengthens the focus in three key areas: Covid Recovery Strategy; highlighting good practice and identifying key barriers; and strengthening the influencing role of the CPP Board.</p> <p>The Community Planning Improvement Board will undertake a series of ‘deep dives’ focussing on the three priorities outlined in the Covid Recovery Strategy: financial security for low income households, wellbeing of children and young people; and good, green jobs and fair work. These ‘deep dives’ will focus on how partners will work differently (or are already doing so) to achieve improved outcomes.</p> <p>Ayrshire College is piloting a hybrid working scheme for staff which will be evaluated in July 2023.</p> <p>The Council’s Recovery and Renewal Workforce Plan focused on wellbeing, building a coaching culture and flexible place-based services. It ensured a fair wage for lower-paid, front line employees, who worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic. Its Workforce Plan (2022-27) focusses on key themes of Workforce Wellbeing &amp; Development, continuing to strengthen the young workforce via apprenticeships and other training opportunities and taking account of external impacts such as cost of living rises, Brexit, technological developments and finding alternative solutions to a lack of suitably qualified people by developing career pathways and identifying attractive retraining opportunities for employees.</p> <p>Via Scottish Attainment Challenge funding, the Council has worked closely with a range of targeted families within our iLunch and Parental Empowerment Programmes. These are place based within community facilities. Each group met with the Financial Inclusion Team to maximise potential benefits, whilst advice and guidance has been provided to support retraining or returning to work opportunities linked to Covid recovery. Training courses and career opportunities have been created and followed up by participants.</p>
<p><b>ES22</b> Support the Young Person’s</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of a <b>Young Person Guarantee Board</b> in East Ayrshire.</li> </ul>	<p>EAC; AC; SDS; SE</p>	<p>The Young Person’s Guarantee (YPG) Board was established in March 2021. Comprised of a range of strategic partners across the</p>

<p>Guarantee by ensuring that every young person has access to a job, education, training or development programme.</p>	<p>This Board will have responsibility for an immediate funding allocation and over the longer term is expected to develop its remit to take on a broader 'No One Left Behind' umbrella approach to all employability activity in East Ayrshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of <b>innovative new courses</b> in growth areas including engineering, computing, digital, education and social care, which are linked to employers and developed with industry partners.</li> </ul>	<p>AC; EAC; SDS; universities.</p>	<p>public, private and third sectors, strong links have been made with employers and the Local Employability Partnership, ensuring that effective governance arrangements are in place, in line with the 'No One Left Behind' and Scottish Government Charters.</p> <p>YPG has been actively working with young people since September 2021. Between September 2021 - March 2022, YPG worked with 272 young people. The recent grant allocation for Phase 3 funding will support new entrants to the programme and provide funding for a range of accredited courses such as social care, computing and digital skills, linking closely with employability and local employers.</p> <p>YPG is also due to pilot their first Sector Skills Academy with QTS on the Railway/Engineering sector, a 9 week programme for 12 young people. Accredited training is being funded for young people including CSCS Cards for construction, first aid and health and safety. The focus continues to be on growth areas based on local and national research and SDS Regional Skills Assessments, ensuring that delivery and the needs of 16-24 year olds aligns with the overall employability offer and partnerships across East Ayrshire.</p> <p>Ayrshire College continues to explore new and innovative courses linked to growth sectors. This includes an online course which introduces students to careers in adult social care. The College is also investigating a course in conjunction with local companies Emergency One and Egger, that will be designed to provide a pipeline of staff into their businesses. Both companies have reported recruitment difficulties related to their location. The College will be working with a local secondary school to develop a bespoke Foundation Apprenticeship or PEO.</p> <p>The Construction Technology &amp; Trades curriculum continually revises and develops to ensure the curriculum is dynamic and flexible and meets identified skills needs. Course boards have been set up with employer representation to ensure that the content is fit for purpose and gives students the best possible chance to enter the job market. Where possible students are offered the chance of work experience with local employers.</p>
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<p><b>ES23</b> Expand provision of school, college and apprenticeship places to meet emerging demands in new and high-growth areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Workforce Strategies.</b> Enhanced focus on succession planning, including an increase in the numbers of apprenticeships.</li> <li>• <b>Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships.</b> Embed Foundation Apprenticeships within the core senior phase curriculum offer in East Ayrshire Schools. Offer and ensure pathways to Modern Apprenticeships specifically highlighted as areas of significance for the Ayrshire region. Embed Graduate Apprenticeships within the</li> </ul>	<p>ALL</p> <p>AC; SDS; EAC</p>	<p>The Council approved the establishment of a new Jobs and Training Fund in February 2022. Jobs and training opportunities will be available to all residents including those currently on the Council's Employability programmes. 200 placements be established over the next three years. The placements will be based on fair work principles, use the Council's apprenticeship scales and align to the Council's terms and conditions wherever possible and will provide work based skills and qualifications.</p> <p>Senior phase school pupils have access to 9 Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks delivered across the 3 main Ayrshire College campuses and can also access 2 Foundation Apprenticeship programmes in schools.</p> <p>Foundation Apprenticeship Social Services (Children &amp; Young People) is delivered in Kilmarnock Academy by the Education Service Early Years Assessor Team and combines classroom learning in school with work placements in our Early Childhood Centres over the course of a school session.</p>

	<p>core further and higher education curriculum offer from 2021/22.</p>		<p>At Loudoun Academy, teaching staff from the Arts &amp; Home Economics faculty deliver the Food and Drink Technologies Foundation Apprenticeship partnered by a local training provider. In 2021-22, collaboration between the school and Facilities and Property Management enabled learners to access the Council's new Central Catering Production Unit, where much of the assessment for the workplace learning element of the course was carried out.</p> <p>Foundation Apprenticeships in Children and Young People, Engineering, Civil Engineering, Scientific Technologies, Business Skills, Social Services and Food and Drink Technologies are all available as part of the school-college partnership offer.</p> <p>Within the Council's Education Service, work is taking place to increase understanding of the current level, range and impact of additional support needs for young people reflecting the recommendations of the Morgan Review of Additional Support for Learning, specifically that the achievements of children and young people with additional support should be viewed in equivalence to attainment and exam results, and our measures take account of the diverse range of achievements, including in vocational learning.</p> <p>The Energy Masterplan, once published, will assist in the targeting of sector development and innovation and provide a routemap for the Regional Skills Investment Plan to focus new courses that will meet the emerging technologies.</p>
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