



Community Planning Aberdeen

Progress Report	Project End Report 3.1: Increase the number of responsible businesses working with Community Planning Aberdeen through Community Benefits and CSR activity by 200% by 2023
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Governance Group	CPA Board – 19/04/2023

Purpose of the Report
This report presents the results of the LOIP Improvement Project Aim 3.1 which sought to increase the number of responsible businesses working with Community Planning Aberdeen through Community Benefits and CSR activity by 200% by 2023 and seeks approval to end the project.

Summary of Key Information
<p>1. BACKGROUND</p> <p>1.1 Aberdeen has an engaged business community who are proud of the city and routinely support a wide variety of causes. As a response to the emerging issues arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became clear that there was an opportunity for business collaboration with Community Planning Aberdeen. In 2020, a platform was created for businesses to find information about how they could align their corporate social responsibility efforts to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and contribute to long lasting, transformational change.</p> <p>1.2 Responsible Business - Community Planning Aberdeen was officially launched at Community Planning Aberdeen’s first Responsible Business event, held in partnership with Business In The Community Scotland. The event was the first of its kind for Community Planning Aberdeen and was a starting point for the partnership’s relationship with Aberdeen Responsible Businesses. The online event attracted 61 attendees representing 17 businesses, as well as public and third sector organisations across the city.</p> <p>1.3 Following the event, Community Planning Aberdeen received several new enquiries from the business community of how they could support the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. An opportunity arose for us to work to grow and connect with more Aberdeen Responsible Businesses across the city to support overall delivery of LOIP projects. This report provides an update on progress since the beginning of the project and reports evidence of how we have achieved our aim and supported the overall stretch outcome.</p>

2. IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AIM

- 2.1 On September 2021 the CPA Board approved the [project charter](#) for the initiation of an improvement project which aimed to Increase the number of responsible businesses working with Community Planning Aberdeen through Community Benefits and CSR activity by 200% by 2023.

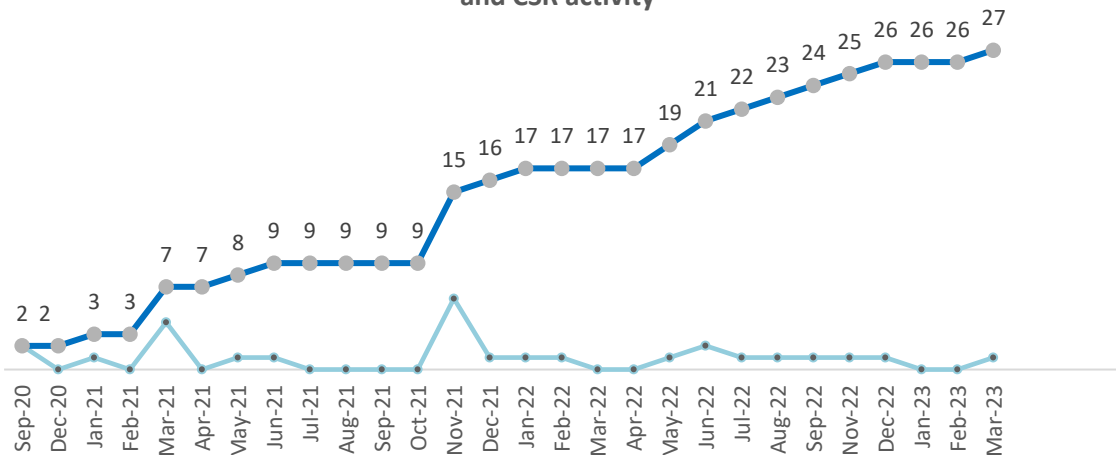
3. WHAT CHANGES DID WE MAKE?

- 3.1 Responsible Business Event – Since their launch in 2020, we have delivered these events yearly. The events are structured to attract businesses from across the city and are used for promoting opportunities for business support with Local Outcome Improvement Plan projects, sharing good practice from members of our current network, and to offer a networking space between private business, the third sector, and statutory partners involved with the delivery of the LOIP.
- 3.2 Partnership working with Business in the Community – We have worked closely with BITC throughout the project, taking a joint approach to our Annual Responsible Business event, and utilising the opportunities they can provide to businesses in the form of workshops, networking sessions and funding opportunities. We have used BITC's CSR Networking Sessions to connect with the business community. These events are quarterly and offer Community Planning Aberdeen and opportunity to share information to the BITC network.
- 3.3 We continue to make use of the Responsible Business Platform hosted on the Community Planning Aberdeen website to share information with businesses and promote events.
- 3.4 Community benefits presented an opportunity to increase responsible business activity. We have made changes to the community benefits plan part of tender documentation to include stronger community engagement during community benefit delivery. One example of a change made in this area is a specific ask of contracted businesses to approach their surrounding community no less than one month before commencement of the project to gather ideas and opportunities of where support is best placed.
- 3.5 Social Media – Whilst Community Planning Aberdeen were already sharing opportunities on their website, and social media platforms Facebook and Twitter, Linked in provided an opportunity for stronger business engagement due to the nature of the platform and it's users. This was set up in 2022 and has attracted 77 followers, the platform is used to promote project communications and updates and opportunities for business collaboration.

4. HAVE OUR CHANGES RESULTED IN IMPROVEMENT?

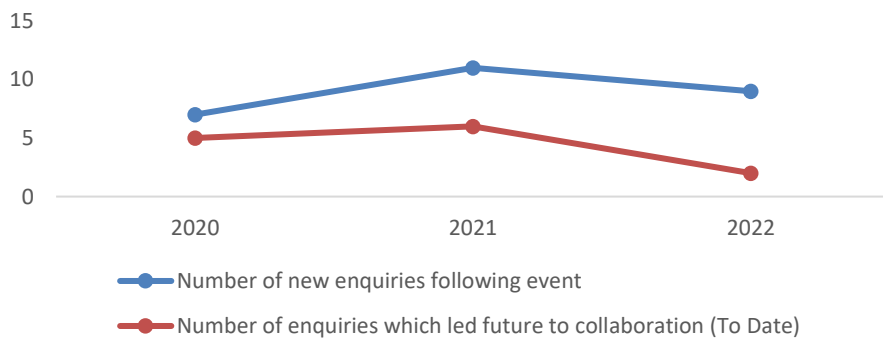
- 4.1 Our changes have resulted in improvement, with an increase in responsible business partners from 2 in 2020 to 27 in 2023. This is a 200% increase since the beginning of this improvement project in September 2021 which means the project has achieved its aim.

No. of responsible businesses working with CPA through Community Benefits and CSR activity



4.2 Our Annual Responsible Business event has been one of our most impactful change ideas. Since its launch in October 2020, engagement in the events has grown. It provides an opportunity for businesses to engage with each other, Community Planning Aberdeen, and the third sector, and to understand more about the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and how they can get involved. The event is open to all business across the city and highlights opportunities for businesses of all sizes to support with our improvement projects. The event has been tested yearly since 2020 and each year has attracted new business enquiries, which has led to future collaboration as well as sustaining relationships with current members of the network.

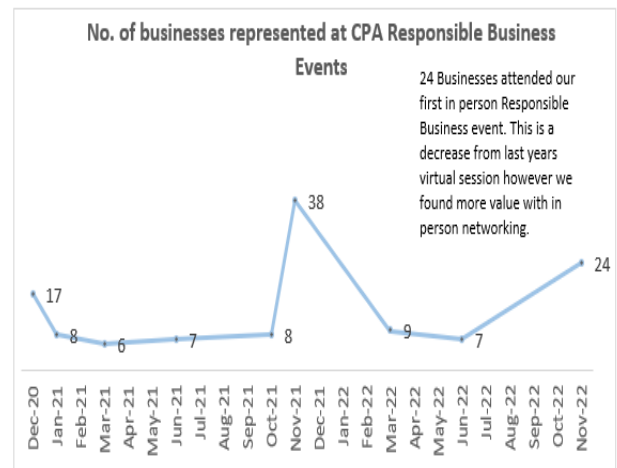
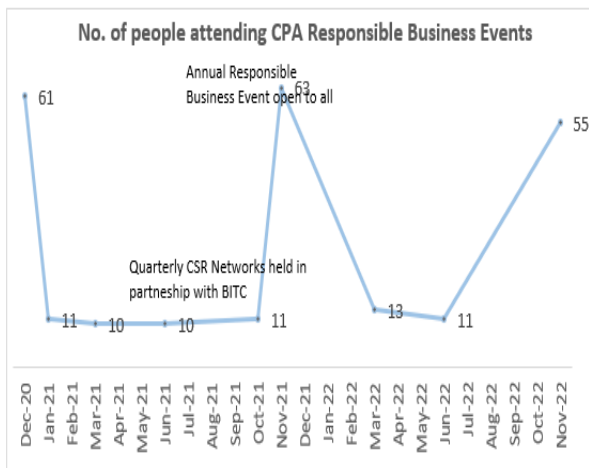
Impact of Responsible Business Event



4.3 The chart provides information on the number of new enquiries following the annual responsible business event each year. It is important to note that although enquiries following the event are usually immediate, in many cases it does not result in immediate collaboration as this is something that takes follow up and further support provided to businesses. An enquiry in November 2021 for example may not lead to becoming a member of the network until the following year.

4.4 Our most recent Responsible Business event was the first in person opportunity for businesses to network and collaborate on several issues and opportunities affecting the city. We worked with a number of other projects to share information and offer opportunities for businesses to support. The event attracted 55 attendees and 24 businesses and has led to several new enquiries from businesses via email and social media. This was slightly less than previous years which may be due to members not being able to join online. Going forward we will look at options for hybrid events.

4.5 A similar approach was tested in June 2022 with responsible businesses in a new setting as part of the employability support fair. The approach attracted 15 businesses, some of which already within the responsible business network, and led to 4 new businesses committing to future collaboration with the network. The fair supported 140 residents of Aberdeen with employability upskilling and promotion of opportunities.



4.6 We are now working with 27 Responsible Business Partners all contributing to the achievement of our LOIP outcomes:



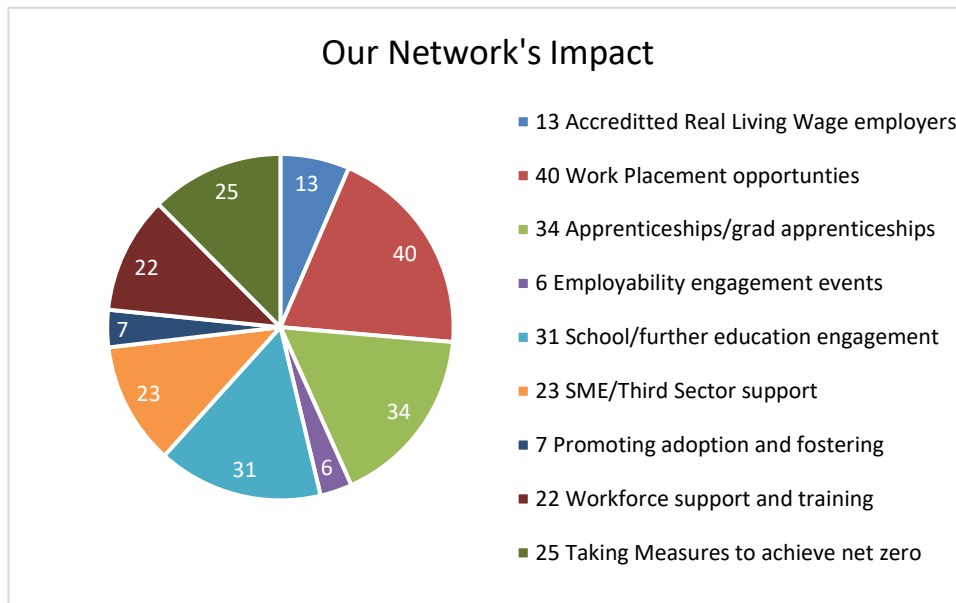
4.7 Another change idea that has resulted in improvement is partnership working with Business in the Community to create and promote events for members of the business networks to come together and discuss good practice. Business In the Community and Community Planning Aberdeen took a joint approach to the Annual Responsible Business event in 2022. Through business in the Communities quarterly CSR Networking Sessions,

many businesses were able to be introduced to the work of community planning Aberdeen and has led to enquiries and engagement from a diverse range of new businesses.

4.8 The creation of a Community Planning Aberdeen linked in has attracted 83 new followers from members of the business community. We are using this platform to target business engagement with specific LOIP activities.

5.1 WHAT IMPACT HAVE WE HAD?

5.1 The chart below summarises just some of the outcomes achieved by our Responsible Business Partners in 2021-2022:



5.2 Highlights of Responsible Business Impact by Priority:

Supporting Our Economy



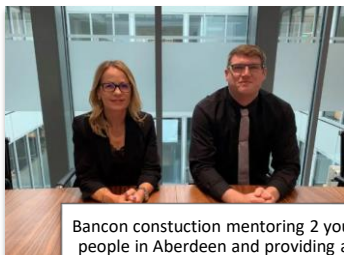
Robertson Group working with barnardos to provide placement opportunities for 12 trainees



CHAP supporting ABZ works by providing training, placements and employment for long term unemployed



CMS collaboration with DYW to provide learning opportunities for the future workforce



Bancon constuction mentoring 2 young people in Aberdeen and providing a 4 week paid internship at the end



BP, John Lewis and Golf Connect donation of equipment including laptops, smart phones and printers to support people into employment and improve digital skills



Balfour Beatty developing the young workforce through industry training

Supporting Our People



CHAP donation of materials and container to support creation of a Youth Hub with Northfield Youth Action Group



Vital Energi supporting local schools by delivering lessons about the industry and environment



Donations from across our network of food, christmas presents and necessities to our most vulnerable



Graham construction supporting wellbeing in work by training mental health first aiders in the workplace as well as issuing monthly 'Health MOTs' for staff



MAC Roofing donation of footballs and sponsorship of local youth football team



Barclays Bank supporting young carers by sponsoring activities

Supporting Our Place



Worley and Barclays supporting the city with group litter picks



Morrison Construction providing support to local community in aftermath of storm Arwen



William Rae Roofing supporting local sea cadets during bad weather by making essential repairs and prolonging life of buildings



WM Donald have received carbon neutral status and become an accredited living wage employer



Total Energies and Balfour Beatty support Ukranian Refugees in Aberdeen through donations and volunteering



Robertson Construction restoration of seaton community Totem Pole

6. HOW WILL WE SUSTAIN THESE IMPROVEMENTS?

- Bi-monthly meetings with a streamlined working group to discuss progress and links to where the network can be supporting ongoing projects.
- Continuation of CSR Networking sessions and Annual Responsible Business Event by taking a joint approach between Aberdeen City Council and Business in the Community.

- We will continue to maximise delivery of community benefits through the project tender documentation and maintain a strong link between the community benefits project officer and Community Planning Aberdeen.
- Social media channels will continue to be monitored and updated by Community Planning Aberdeen team and will reflect upcoming opportunities and share good practice.

7. HOW WILL WE MONITOR THESE IMPROVEMENTS?

7.1 We will continue to track the number of Responsible Businesses working in partnership with Community Planning Aberdeen and publish this data online via the Aberdeen Outcomes Framework. We will also continue to gather data about attendance at Aberdeen Responsible Business events; connections made through linkedin and other social media platforms; and community benefit activity through the Annual Procurement Report. This will ensure that we respond to any indications that improvements are not being sustained.

8. OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCALE UP AND SPREAD

8.1 To date the Aberdeen Responsible Business initiative has focussed on engaging businesses across the City to support delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. In September 2022, ACVO agreed to merge their ACVO Affiliates Programme with the Aberdeen Responsible Business initiative in order to strengthen the programme and maximise the use of shared partner resources. There is potential to engage the Aberdeen Responsible Business network considerably further as a result of this merger and spread the impact of the initiative to support wider third sector partners and community groups. ACVO will join ACC colleagues as co-leads for the delivery of the Aberdeen Responsible Business initiative going forward.

Recommendations for Action

It is recommended that the CPA Board:

- i) Agree to recommend that testing is concluded and that this Improvement Project is brought to an end on the basis that we have achieved our aim and have implemented changes that will sustain these improvements; and
- ii) Notes plans to continue to scale up and spread the Aberdeen Responsible Business initiative to wider third sector partners and community groups in partnership with ACVO.

Opportunities and Risks

The Aberdeen Responsible Business initiative was initially a response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Since then we have continued to grow the network and in the face of the Cost of Living Crisis, working hand in hand with the business sector, and other partners continues to offer the best chance of recovering now and in the longer term. Responsible businesses understand that they have an important role to play in supporting the most vulnerable in society and by working with Community Planning Aberdeen they can make a real difference to these people's lives.

Consultation

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Claire Shaw, ACVO
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Tanita Addario, ACC
Members of Aberdeen Prospers
CPA Management Group

Background Papers

The following papers were used in the preparation of this report.

[Annual Procurement Report](#)
[Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#)
[3.1 Community Benefits Project Charter](#)

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