



Fiona McKenzie, CEO and Paul Mathieson, COO at Centrestage pictured at the launch event.

‘Building Thriving Communities’ with Barclays.

Barclays Bank arrived in Kilmarnock on Tuesday 11th June, selecting Ayrshire College, Kilmarnock campus as the location for the launch of their ‘Building Thriving Local Economies’ initiative.

The event, hosted by Barclays is the second of four pilot schemes the bank has planned around the UK, having launched its first initiative in Bury, Greater Manchester, last year. Local Cllr Elaine Whitham, Dr Marie Macklin, CBE and Barclays Global CEO, Jes Staley all shared their thoughts, vision and expected outcomes of the unique partnership with the town.

Barclays, one of the UK’s biggest banks will "join forces" with local leaders across government, business and education as part of its ‘Building Thriving Communities’ scheme. It aims to boost the aspirations and skills of children and adults in the town to "help them be ready for the future world of work and match the skills that businesses nationwide are seeking".

Under the plan the bank will introduce "bespoke programmes and support" to help business growth, skills and training in Kilmarnock and surrounding areas. From August this year, all secondary schools in Kilmarnock will have access to the bank's Life Skills programme, which aims to equip people with skills they need for the world of work. The bank will also provide support for start-ups, development and growth of small and medium-sized businesses and entrepreneurs.

Ian Rand, CEO, Business Banking at Barclays said “At a time of relative economic uncertainty, I believe that it is really vital for banks to work with community and business leaders, business owners and others to understand how ‘local economies’ are doing. I believe that Scotland’s – and



the UK's – economic prosperity is going to be driven by hard working people and businesses in different local economies the length and breadth of the country: investing in growth, creating jobs, developing skills."

Centrestage, CEO, Fiona McKenzie who attended the launch event, commented on the significant news for the town, "This is such an incredible time for Kilmarnock with HALO, Barclays initiative and our plans for the former Kilmarnock Academy - it's inspiring to have everyone work collectively in reviving our great town. We're delighted to be involved with the initiative, having already had several exciting conversations with the Barclays team. We very much look forward to working together in supporting the wider activity."

Find out more about Barclays plans for 'Backing Kilmarnock' home.barclays/news/2019/6/barclays-helping-kilmarnock-thrive/

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