

## REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 3 OCTOBER 2019

### NORTH SEA COMMISSION – VICE PRESIDENT TRAVEL

#### 1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 The reason for this report is to request Committee approval for Councillor Argyle to attend meetings on behalf of the North Sea Commission Presidency in his role as North Sea Commission Vice President.

#### 2 Recommendations

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 2.1 **Authorise the attendance and incurring of associated costs of Councillor Argyle attending meetings in his role as North Sea Commission Vice President.**

#### 3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 Aberdeenshire Council is a member of the North Sea Commission (NSC), which aims to strengthen partnerships between regional authorities which face the challenges and opportunities presented by the North Sea.
- 3.2 On 1 June 2017 (Item 6), Infrastructure Services Committee appointed Councillors Argyle and Stirling to represent the Council in NSC meetings. Additional Elected Members were also appointed to each of the four Thematic Groups which operate within the NSC.
- 3.3 On 14 March 2019 (Item 11), Infrastructure Services Committee approved Elected Member travel to Economic Development-related events, including North Sea Commission meetings. This authorised travel to the NSC General Assembly, NSC Executive Committee and Thematic Groups for the nominated Members.
- 3.4 On 25 June 2019, Councillor Argyle was elected as Vice President of the NSC at the organisation's Annual Business Meeting.

#### 4 Discussion

- 4.1 When Councillor Argyle was invited to stand as a candidate for the NSC Vice Presidency, clarification was sought from the NSC on any likely additional meetings/costs. The NSC advised that the Vice President would usually participate in meetings with the President/second Vice President by phone. As such, it was not anticipated that any additional travel over and above that previously authorised by Committee would be required.
- 4.2 During the first phone meeting with the NSC Presidency and Secretariat, it was indicated that Councillor Argyle would be expected to represent the NSC Presidency at some NSC Thematic Group meetings. There may also be

other unforeseen meetings which Councillor Argyle may be expected to attend on behalf of the NSC Presidency. This report therefore requests authorisation for Councillor Argyle to travel to attend meetings on behalf of the NSC Presidency.

## 5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

5.1 The recommendations of this report help to deliver Council Priority 1 - Support a strong, sustainable, diverse and successful economy by helping to deliver the Council's Economic Development Priorities (2017-21). In particular, the priority 'to strengthen the region's network of international relationships and partnerships to attract EU funds in areas of research and policy that supports economic growth' would be supported through active participation in the North Sea Commission.

5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation is agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial	X		
Staffing		X	
Equalities			X
Fairer Scotland Duty			X
Town Centre First			X
Sustainability	X		
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			X

5.3 An equality impact assessment is not required because the report does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.

5.4 There are financial implications which are estimated to be the costs of attending up to three meetings per year at a cost of £600 each for travel and accommodation, totalling £1,800 per annum. The costs of this travel would be met from Page 107, Line 10 of the Council's revenue budget for Elected Member Travel and Subsistence.

5.5 The sustainability implications of this report are that additional travel (usually by air) would be required, generating an estimated 2 tonnes of CO2 per year (based on a typical meeting itinerary of a return flight from Aberdeen to Aalborg, DK via Amsterdam, NL 3 times per year).

5.6 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a [Corporate Level](#):

- Working with other organisations (e.g. supply chains, outsourcing, partnership working and commercialisation)

The following risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a [Strategic Level](#):

- Economic Development

## **6 Scheme of Governance**

- 6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 6.2 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section F.3.3 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the attendance of members at courses and conferences relating to matters within the remit of this Committee and within the approved budget allocation.

**Stephen Archer**  
**Director of Infrastructure Services**

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6 September 2019

