

**REPORT TO NORTHERN ROADS COLLABORATION JOINT COMMITTEE – 18
MAY 2018**

**APPOINTMENT OF LEAD AUTHORITY AND SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS TO
THE JOINT COMMITTEE**

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Appoint Aberdeenshire Council as Lead Authority for the Joint Committee;**
- 1.2 Agree the support arrangements for the Joint Committee as detailed in this report;**
- 1.3 Delegate authority to the Lead Officer following consultation with the Officers Working Group to agree detailed terms and conditions for the support arrangements;**
- 1.4 Note the financial forecast at Appendix 1 to this report; and**
- 1.5 Note that the support provision shall be reviewed after a period of twelve months.**

2 Background/Discussion

- 2.1 The Minute of Agreement entered into by the Member Councils details the arrangements for support to the Joint Committee to ensure the Committee has the necessary resource to fulfil its remit. This includes appointing a Lead Authority to facilitate the provision of key support services including legal, financial, committee and audit support. It has been agreed by the Officers Working Group that Aberdeenshire Council should take on this role and the Joint Committee is therefore recommended to appoint Aberdeenshire Council as Lead Authority.
- 2.2 It is proposed that the Lead Authority shall facilitate the support arrangements to the Joint Committee as follows:-
 - 1) Aberdeenshire Council shall provide legal and committee support to meetings of the Joint Committee. This includes the provision of a Committee Clerk and report monitoring.
 - 2) Financial support will be provided by Highland Council. This shall include the provision of financial statements at the end of every quarter and advice to the Chief Officers Working Group where required.
 - 3) External audit services shall be provided by Audit Scotland.
- 2.3 The Lead Officer shall agree detailed terms and conditions for the support provision in due course with the nominated officers. Where additional support

needs are identified the Lead Authority shall take steps to arrange the necessary officer/resource to meet requirements.

- 2.4 The cost of provision of support to the Joint Committee shall form part of the operating costs which shall be borne equally by each Member Authority. A financial forecast has been prepared by the nominated Finance Officer and forms **Appendix 1** to this report. It has not however been possible to confirm with Audit Scotland what the costs of the audit function will be as this is not yet known. Aberdeenshire Council will receive notification of this in late 2018 and a revised financial forecast to incorporate that cost will be submitted to the Joint Committee thereafter.
- 2.5 Members should further note that it is difficult to be precise at this stage in assessing the level of support required to the Joint Committee. Accordingly the Lead Officer shall review the support provision after a period of twelve months and report back to the Joint Committee with any proposals for variation of the terms once there is greater clarity as to what will be required.
- 2.6 The Financial Monitoring Officer within Highland Council and the Legal Monitoring Officer within Aberdeenshire Council have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are satisfied that the report complies with the constitutional arrangements of the Member Councils and legislation.

3 Implications and Risk

- 3.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because the report relates to procedural matters in relation to the Joint Committee and does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.
- 3.2 The costs of support provision to the Joint Committee shall form part of the operating costs which will be borne equally by the Member Councils.
- 3.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter; the Joint Committee will require appropriate professional support in order to fulfil its functions and in the absence of same there is a risk that decisions will be taken without proper advice and information. The provision of an audit function is a statutory requirement and therefore there is no discretion.

Ewan Wallace
Lead Officer

FINANCIAL FORECAST - NORTHERN ROADS JOINT COMMITTEE

FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2018/2019

	Cost of Supporting the Joint Committee	Cost of Supporting Project Initiatives	TOTAL COST
Finance Costs	£1,092	£1,456	£2,548
Legal Costs	£6,720	£9,600	£16,320
Committee Services Costs	£7,680		£7,680
TOTAL	<u>£15,492</u>	<u>£11,056</u>	<u>£26,548</u>

Finance Support Costs

Activity	Time per quarter	Cost per quarter	Annual cost
Provision of financial advice to the Joint Committee and/or Lead Officer	3.5 hrs	£91	£364
Attendance at meeting of Joint Committee	1 day	£182	£728
Financial monitoring of Project Initiatives	2 days	£364	£1,456
TOTAL ANNUAL COST OF FINANCE SUPPORT		£2,548	£1,092
Legal Costs		£4,080	£16,320
Committee Services Costs		£1,920	£7,680
TOTAL SUPPORT COSTS		£26,548	£15,492

Notes:

Hourly rate of £26 used (Accountant hourly rate plus 30% oncosts)

Legal and Committee Services costs provided by Ruth O'Hare