

REPORT TO INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 12 MARCH 2020

ELECTED MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT EVENTS AND CONFERENCES, 2020-21

1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 The report sets out a number of important events and conferences that Elected Members may wish to attend to promote economic development and growth in Aberdeenshire during 2020-21. It seeks approval for this outline plan and associated budget expenditure.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider the key economic development related events, conferences and exhibitions for the next financial year as set out in the report;
- 2.2 Approve Elected Member attendance as set out in Appendix 1 and the associated budget requirements Economic Development budgets; and
- 2.3 Agree to delegate authority to amend the agreed attendance and nominate substitutes, if required, to the Head of Economic Development and Protective Services, following consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokesperson for Infrastructure Services Committee.

3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 Each year, Infrastructure Services Committee considers an annual plan for Elected Member attendance at events, conferences and exhibitions where there is the opportunity to promote Aberdeenshire and / or to engage in co-operative and collaborative discussions and initiatives with public, private and third sector partners. The content of the report is accurate at the time of writing, and delegated authority is also sought to enable Elected Members and the Council to respond effectively and timeously to opportunities as they arise during the financial year, subject to appropriate budget being available.

4 Discussion

- 4.1 The Economic Development Service is involved with a number of events, conferences and exhibitions throughout each year, some of which the Service is responsible for managing, some which the Service sponsors or which form part of partnership agreements and others which are attended in a stakeholder capacity.

- 4.2 Senior political and officer Aberdeenshire Council representation at the events, conferences and exhibitions as outlined at Appendix 1 is considered to be important in terms of the Council's civic and business leadership roles, its support for inclusive economic growth, its leadership of partnerships such as the Regional Economic Strategy and City Region Deal, Visit Aberdeenshire, Invest Aberdeen and sector-based partnerships such as the North East Scotland Fisheries Development Partnership. Key objectives from active participation in the proposed events are:
- To promote Aberdeenshire as an attractive location to start-up, expand and grow business;
 - To promote the unique strengths of the local economy and its role in supporting the Scottish and UK economies;
 - To forge and strengthen links and co-operation with partners that support economic development and growth;
 - To promote Aberdeenshire Council's priorities around developing a sustainable and successful local economy and its role in assisting business and industry;
 - To promote understanding between businesses and Aberdeenshire Council;
 - To enable informal dialogue between business leaders and representatives of the Council;
 - To reinforce Elected Members' understanding of and connections to Aberdeenshire's key industries
- 4.3 Appendix 1 contains a list of suggested events for Elected Member attendance, with an indication of which Elected Members should be invited to represent the Council at each.
- 4.4 Financial pressures facing the Council have resulted in a reduction in the budget available for sponsorship of and attendance at events, both within Aberdeenshire, nationally and internationally. Where attendance at national or international events is proposed, therefore, it is done so on the basis of the scope of attendance at that event to progress Aberdeenshire's aspirations in terms of economic growth and business investment.

5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 This report helps deliver Council Priority 1 – Supporting a strong, sustainable, diverse and successful economy.
- 5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are 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 recommendations in this report do not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.
- 5.4 The staffing, financial and sustainability implications are related to potential international travel, if attendance at OTC (Houston) and ONS (Stavanger) goes ahead. A senior officer will accompany the Leader and/or other senior Elected Members on these trips and policies relating to international travel will be applied accordingly. In terms of financial and sustainability implications, these will be considered as part of the planning process for attendance at these events and a decision will be reached following Head of Service consultation with the Leader, Chair, Vice-Chair and Opposition Spokesperson for ISC and the Director for Infrastructure Services.
- 5.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:
- Budget pressures – mitigation through ensuring that best value is secured through the Council's memberships and sponsorship of events. In the event that national or international travel is required, the Council's corporate travel team will be used to ensure transparency of costs.
 - Reputation management (including social media) – mitigation through clear articulation of the benefit of Elected Member engagement in the conferences, exhibitions and events as outlined in terms of promoting Aberdeenshire business opportunities and locations to regional, national and international audiences.

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 their comments are incorporated within the 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 F3.3 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the attendance of Elected Members at courses and conferences within the approved budget allocation.

Stephen Archer, Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Matt Lockley, Service Manager, Economic Development
Date 12 February 2020

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 - suggested conferences, events and exhibitions for Elected Member attendance during the 2020-21 financial year

Event	Month	Location	Suggested Member Attending	Frequency	Est. cost of attending excl. VAT, excl. travel/accom.
Scottish Skipper Expo	May	Aberdeen	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC, Opposition Spokesperson	Yearly	0
Taste of Grampian Sponsors' Dinner	June	P&J Live	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC	Yearly	0*
Taste of Grampian	June	P&J Live	Provost	Yearly	0
Offshore Technology Conference	May	Houston	Council Leader	Yearly	370
Offshore Northern Seas	August	Stavanger	Provost, Council Leader, Chair ISC, Opposition Spokesperson	Biennial	80
Subsea Expo	February (2021)	Aberdeen	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC, Opposition Spokesperson	Yearly	0
Visit Aberdeenshire Tourism Conference	TBC	Various Aberdeenshire / Aberdeen	Provost, Council Leader, Chair ISC	Yearly	150
Aberdeen-Houston or Stavanger Gateway	March (2021) / August	Aberdeen	Provost (invited as guest of organiser)	Yearly	0
North East of Scotland Food & Drink Awards	March (2021)	Aberdeen	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC	Yearly	300
Aberdeen City and Shire Tourism Awards	November	Aberdeen	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC, Opposition Spokesperson	Yearly	300
Elevator Awards	June	Aberdeen	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC, Opposition Spokesperson	Yearly	0*
Business Engagement Lunch	Various	2 x Aberdeenshire locations	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC, Ward Members	Twice yearly	3000
Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce Shire Connections	Various	Various Aberdeenshire	Ward Members	Thrice yearly	300
Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce Northern Star Awards	March (2021)	P&J Live	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC, Opposition Spokesperson	Yearly	300
Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce Business Breakfasts	Various	Various Aberdeenshire/Aberdeen	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC, Opposition Spokesperson	Various	750
KIMO AGM and conference	October	Banff-Macduff	Provost, Leader, Chair ISC, Opposition Spokesperson, local Ward Members	Yearly	Hosting costs approved by ISC in November 2019
North Sea Commission (NSC) General Assembly/North Sea Conference	June	Rotterdam	Two Members (nominated)	Yearly	0
NSC Executive Committee***	Various	Various	One Member (nominated)	Thrice yearly	0
NSC Energy and Climate Change Group	Various	Various	One Member (nominated)	Thrice yearly	0
NSC Marine Resources Group	Various	Various	One Member (nominated)	Thrice yearly	0
NSC Smart Regions	Various	Various	One Member (nominated)	Thrice yearly	0
NSC Transport Group	Various	Various	One Member (nominated)	Thrice yearly	0
Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions	October	Crete	One Member (nominated)	Yearly	0
					5550

* Included in Sponsorship Package

** Included in Premier Partner/Shire Connections/Sponsorship Package

*** One of the Elected Members is appointed to the General Assembly, if elected by other Scottish North Sea Commission members

