

## **Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee**

### **REPORT TO NORTHERN ROADS COLLABORATION JOINT COMMITTEE - 10 DECEMBER 2021**

#### **REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND FINANCIAL MONITORING**

##### **1 Recommendations**

**The Joint Committee is recommended to:**

- 1.1 Note the financial information at paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7; and**
- 1.2 Note that a review of the governance arrangements of the Joint Committee shall be paused until the next Council term in May 2022.**

##### **2 Background/Discussion**

###### **Review of Governance Arrangements**

- 2.1 The Joint Committee was established by Minute of Agreement dated 6 October 2017 between all seven Member Authorities, with the first formal meeting taking place on 16 May 2018. The Minute of Agreement governs the business and the operation of the Joint Committee and covers areas such as:-
  - (i) The aims, objectives and remit of the Joint Committee;
  - (ii) Appointment of Members of the Joint Committee;
  - (iii) Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair;
  - (iv) Support arrangements for the Joint Committee;
  - (v) Arrangements for the Officers Group;
  - (vi) Process for establishing Project Initiatives;
- 2.2 Since its inception, the Joint Committee has considered a wide range of activities under the terms of the Minute of Agreement. As yet, no formal Project Initiatives have been taken forward under the process outlined in the Agreement however several projects and collaboration activities have been pursued outwith that structure and reported to the Joint Committee.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 28 August 2020 the Joint Committee agreed to commence a review of the governance arrangements. However due to limited resources and the diverting of staff to other priority work it has not yet been possible to undertake the review. Given where we are now in the Council term, it is proposed that a prudent approach would be to pause until the local government elections in May 2022, at which point the new membership of the Joint Committee can consider the position and determine how to proceed with the review.

## Financial Statement and Forecast

- 2.4 The Minute of Agreement provides that the Joint Committee shall approve an annual financial statement and receive an annual financial forecast for consideration.
- 2.5 The financial statement for 2020/2021 is as undernoted. The charges incurred by the Member Authorities relate to the costs of the support for Committee, legal, and financial services from both Aberdeenshire and Highland Councils. This reflects a reduction in the costs forecast for the year which were reported to the Joint Committee at its meeting in August 2020 as a result of the cancellation of a meeting in spring 2020 following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

	Cost of Supporting the Joint Committee	Cost of Supporting Project Initiatives	Total Cost
Finance	£0	£0	£0
Legal	£5040	£0	£5040
Committee Services	£5760		£5760
Project Costs		£0	£0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£10,800</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£10,800</b>

- 2.6 The financial forecast for 2021/2022 is as undernoted. Any amendments to the financial forecast as a result of further projects will be reported back to this Committee.

	Cost of Supporting the Joint Committee	Cost of Supporting Project Initiatives	Total Cost
Finance	£0	£0	£0
Legal	£6720	£0	£6720
Committee Services	£7680		£7680
Project Costs			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£14,400</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£14,400</b>

## 3 Implications and Risk

- 3.1 An integrated 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 form part of the operating costs which are borne equally by the Member Councils.
- 3.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter: the business of the Joint Committee will not be conducted effectively if the

governance framework is not fit for purpose and regular review of the governance arrangements will ensure they reflect the requirements of the Joint Committee.

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**Lead Officer**

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