

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE

20 AUGUST, 2021

- Present:** Councillors A Kille (Chair), P Argyle and G Petrie (Aberdeenshire Council);
Councillors M Boulton, G Graham and J Laing (Aberdeen City Council); and
Mrs J Craw and Sir Ian Wood (ONE).
- Apologies:** Councillor R Houghton (Aberdeen City); and Prof S Logan (ONE).
- Officers:** Aberdeenshire Council – Mr A Wood, Director of Infrastructure Services, Mr P Macari, Head of Planning and Environment, Ms A Gibbs, Principal Solicitor, Ms M Beattie, Interim Head of Finance, Ms A McLeod, Committee Officer.
Aberdeen City Council - Mr R Sweetnam, Chief Officer, City Growth, Ms J Richards Wood, Programme Manager, Ms A Gray, PMO Support Officer.
- In attendance:** Mr P Finch and Mr R Dickson, NESTRANS

1. SEDERUNT AND DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Apologies were intimated in respect of Councillor Houghton, Aberdeen City Council and Professor Logan, ONE.

Sir Ian Wood, Mrs Craw and Councillor Kille, declared an interest in item 6, specifically in terms of any issues affecting Opportunity North East (ONE) or the new Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) which may arise in the discussion, by virtue of them being a Board Member of Opportunity North East. They considered that the nature of their interest did not require them to leave the meeting during the consideration of this item. In addition, Mrs Craw declared an interest in item 6, in terms of any issues affecting Bio Aberdeen Ltd and Food Hub North East Scotland Ltd, by virtue of her being a board member of these organisations and she considered that the nature of her interest did not require her to leave the meeting.

2. RESOLUTIONS

- (A) Public Sector Equality Duty - In making decisions on the following items of business, the Joint Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of The Equality Act, 2010;-
- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - c. foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (2) where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its content and take this into account when reaching a decision.
- (B) Exempt Information - The Joint Committee **agreed**, in terms of Sections 50A (4) and (5) of The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of item 9 so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE OF 14 MAY, 2021

The Joint Committee had before it and **approved** as a correct record, the Minute of Meeting of the Joint Committee of 14 May, 2021, subject to (1) the declaration of interest attributed to Councillor Laing in item 2(1) being amended to read Councillor Boulton; and (2) the reference to 'Department of Transport' in the list of officers in attendance being amended to 'Transport Scotland'.

4. MINUTE OF MEETING OF CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE OF 1 JULY, 2021

The Joint Committee had before it and approved as a correct record, the Minute of Meeting of the Joint Committee of 1 July, 2021.

5. APPOINTMENT OF ONE MEMBERS

Mrs Craw, ONE, advised the Joint Committee that a scheduled meeting of the Nominations Committee of ONE had been postponed and it had therefore not been possible to finalise the nomination of new Members to represent ONE on the Joint Committee. It was proposed to bring a report on nominations to the next meeting of the Joint Committee for approval. The Joint Committee **noted** the position.

6. ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE

The Joint Committee had before it and **noted** a report dated 20 August, 2021 by the Programme Manager, which provided information on the progress of the City Region Deal and its constituent workstreams, through the body of the report and Appendix 1 – Project Updates.

7. EXTERNAL LINKS TO ABERDEEN SOUTH HARBOUR – UPDATED STRATEGIC BUSINESS CASE

There had been circulated a report dated 20 August, 2021 by NESTRANS, seeking approval of an updated strategic business case for the External Transportation Links to the Aberdeen South Harbour project. The report provided an update on the project

which set out a commitment to investing up to £25 million from the UK and Scottish Governments in supporting state-aid compliant roads infrastructure, to maximise the impact of the Aberdeen South Harbour project on the wider regional economy, subject to a satisfactory business case. The Strategic Business Case annexed to the report was seeking approval to draw down £1.2m for project management, surveys and investigations, design development, obtaining all necessary approvals, permissions, licences, agreements and consents required to develop the design, and a project programme had been developed and provided proposed timescales for the completion of the planning process.

The Joint Committee heard from Mr Finch, Transport Strategy Manager, NESTRANS, who provided further background information and context to the report and responded to questions from Members around the timescales for the project. He explained that the final construction programme would be dependent upon the results of the design process which would be undertaken over the next two year period.

Sir Ian Wood requested that the Joint Committee be kept informed of progress, noting the importance for the Energy Transition Zone and other businesses for the project to proceed as expeditiously as possible.

Thereafter, the Joint Committee **agreed**:

- (1) To approve the contents of the Updated Strategic Business Case for the External Transportation Links to the Aberdeen South Harbour project, as per Appendix 1;
- (2) Pending agreement of Aberdeen City's City Growth and Resources Committee, to instruct the Chief Officer City Growth, in his remit as Chair of the Programme Board, to submit the Updated Strategic Business Case to UK and Scottish Governments to draw down £1.2. from the £25m allocated to the project from the Aberdeen City Region Deal; and
- (3) To approve the £1.2m for the costs outlined to complete the specified Design Works and associated project management resource.

8. ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

There had been circulated a report dated 20 August, 2021 by the Programme Manager, seeking the Joint Committee's consideration of the proposed Aberdeen City Region Deal Annual Report 2020-21 and approval for its wider publication.

The Joint Committee heard from the Chief Officer, City Growth, who confirmed that the Project Board, Project Leads and officers had contributed to the content and the report would be published and launched, once it had been approved by the Joint Committee.

During discussion it was suggested that officers should revisit the wording within Section 3 of the report relating to the Transport Theme funding allocation to better clarify the position; that consideration should be given to ensure appropriate communications were issued with the launch of the Annual Report, in order to ensure that residents and businesses were informed of the benefits of the City

Region Deal and on progress of the many ongoing projects. Officers confirmed there were separate workstreams around communications with each of the partners of the City Region Deal participating to ensure information was circulated widely.

Thereafter, the Joint Committee **agreed**:

- (1) To delegate to officers, in consultation with the Members of the Joint Committee, approval of the Aberdeen City Region Deal Annual Report 2020-21, subject to clarification of the wording in Page 146 of the agenda pack (page 9 of the Annual Report) to better reflect the funding of the Transport Theme, which sits separately from the City Region Deal, and amendment of page 189 of the agenda pack (page 52 of the Annual Report) to clarify that Councillor Laing is Leader of Aberdeen City Council; and
- (2) that appropriate communications be issued when the Annual Report was launched to highlight the exceptional performance of the Aberdeen City Region Deal in relation to public and private sector partnership working and the progress of projects including the Net Zero Technology Centre, Bio Hub, Seed Pod and investments in digital infrastructure.

9. BIO HUB

The Joint Committee **noted** an update by the Interim Head of Finance, Aberdeenshire Council, on ongoing discussions with UK and Scottish Governments in relation to funding arrangements for the Bio Hub Aberdeen project.

Councillor Andy Kille, Chair