

# ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

To: Councillor Jenny Laing, Leader of the Council, Councillor Alison Evison, Councillor Jim Gifford, Professor Stephen Logan, Mr Patrick Machray OBE, Councillor Richard Thomson, Councillor Ross Thomson MSP, Sir Ian Wood and Councillor Willie Young

Aberdeen City Council Substitute Members:- Councillors Marie Boulton, Stephen Flynn and Ian Yuill

Aberdeenshire Council Substitute Members:- Councillors David Aitchison, Karen Clark and John Cox

ONE Substitute Members:- Colin Crosby and Jennifer Crow

**Please note that a substitute member may only participate in the meeting when a substantive member is absent.**

Town House,  
ABERDEEN 10 November 2016

## ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE

The Members of the **ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in Committee Room 2 - Town House on **FRIDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2016 at 9.30 am.**

FRASER BELL  
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

### **B U S I N E S S**

#### **DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS**

- 1 Members are requested to determine that any exempt business be considered with the press and public excluded
- 2 New Vice Chair from Aberdeenshire
- 3 Minute of the Previous meeting of 15 August 2016 - for approval (Pages 3 - 8)
- 4 CRD Progress Update (Pages 9 - 12)
- 5 Finance Update - verbal

- 6 Digital Update (Pages 13 - 16)
- 7 Communications Update (Pages 17 - 28)
- 8 Update on Additional £254m Memo of Understanding - verbal

**ITEMS WHICH THE COMMITTEE MAY WISH TO CONSIDER IN PRIVATE**

- 9 Housing Infrastructure Fund (Pages 29 - 32)

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Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Emma Parr  
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### ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 15 August 2016. Minute of Meeting of the ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Laing, Chairperson (for items 4-8); Councillor Kitts-Hayes, Vice Chairperson; and Councillors Gifford and Richard Thomson (Aberdeenshire Council); and Councillors Ross Thomson MSP (for items 4-8) and Young (Aberdeen City Council); and Jennifer Craw (as substitute for Patrick Machray OBE), Professor Stephen Logan and Sir Ian Wood (ONE).

Apologies: Patrick Machray OBE.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located at the following link:-

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeed=546>

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

#### OPENING REMARKS

1. The Vice Chair opened the meeting and explained that the Chair had been delayed and he would assume the Chair until she arrived. The Vice Chair also advised that the meeting was not quorate as per standing order 27 therefore the Joint Committee could not make resolutions until the necessary number of members were present but proposed to hear agenda item 6 (Programme Update) and item 7 (Programme Update – Additional) as these items did not require the Joint Committee's agreement or approval.

#### The Joint Committee resolved:-

To note that the meeting was not quorate and to agree to hear agenda items 6 (Programme Update) and 7 (Programme Update – Additional) as the first items of business.

#### DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Richard Thomson and the Vice Chair declared an interest by virtue of their positions as substantive and substitute Board members of ONE but remained in the meeting as per the requirements of the Standards Commission Dispensation provided to members of the Joint Committee on 9 August 2016.

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**Sir Ian Wood declared an interest with regards to agenda item 5 (Oil and Gas Technology Centre Business Plan) by virtue of his Chairmanship of the OGTC Board but chose to remain in the meeting.**

**PROGRAMME UPDATE**

2. The Joint Committee had before it a report by John-Paul Cleary (CRD Programme Manager, ACC) which provided an update on the Programme to develop the specific projects under the City Region Deal Heads of Terms (£250m).

**The report recommended –**

that the Joint Committee note the progress of the Aberdeen City Region Deal Programme.

John-Paul Cleary (CRD Programme Manager, ACC) spoke to the report and advised that discussions with the two governments were ongoing and he advised that the Assurance Framework attached as Appendix 4 under item 4 (Aberdeen City Region Deal Agreement) would set out the agreed approach to investment and governance to be taken by both governments in relation to the City Region Deal. He also highlighted that the Aberdeen City Region Deal had been represented on a two day Green Book workshop arranged by the Scottish Government which focussed on business case development. The Joint Committee was then provided an update on the various elements of the City Region Deal:

- (i) With regards to the Oil and Gas Technology Centre, the Joint Committee was reminded that this item was on today's agenda under item 4;
- (ii) With regards to the Agri-Food and Nutrition Innovation Hub, the Joint Committee was advised that an outline business case would be presented to the Hub's Board on 18 August 2016;
- (iii) With regards to the Bio-Therapeutic Innovation Centre, the Joint Committee was informed that a business case and plan would be drafted by October 2016 and that additional testing of the concept had been undertaken to evaluate links between clinical research and commercial organisations;
- (iv) With regards to Digital Infrastructure, the Joint Committee was advised that a gap analysis had been completed that mapped current provision of broadband across the city region to identify gaps in broadband connectivity. Lead officers would also be meeting with the Scottish Government, Scottish Futures Trust and Cube Ultra on 16 August 2016 to identify projects for CRD investment. A draft business case would be prepared by officers by the end of August 2016;

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- (v) With regards to the Strategic Transport Appraisal, the Joint Committee was informed that lead officers would be meeting with Transport Scotland on 24 August 2016 to discuss governance, the work programme and funding arrangements with a focus on how CRD funding would be managed; and
- (vi) With regards to the Harbour Expansion Project, the Joint Committee was advised that the scope of the infrastructure work was still to be defined. Lead officers would be meeting with the Harbour Board and Scottish Futures Trust to discuss funding levels and expected expenditure. A decision on the expansion project has been scheduled for October 2016.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note the progress of the Aberdeen City Region Deal Programme; and
- (ii) to advise that a report would be presented to Aberdeen City Council on 17 August 2016 which would provide members with an options appraisal on the devolution of existing and proposed (via the Scotland Bill) powers and to note that this report would be published on the Council's website for members' information.

**ADDITIONAL PROGRAMME UPDATE**

3. The Joint Committee had before it a report by John-Paul Cleary which provided an update on the additional funding of £254m announced by the Scottish Government when the City Region Deal Heads of Terms Agreement was signed in January 2016.

**The report recommended –**

that the Joint Committee note the update on the additional funding.

John-Paul Cleary spoke to the report and advised members that lead officers had entered into discussions with the Scottish Government on integrating the additional funding into the existing governance arrangements for the City Region Deal. He explained that these discussions had not yet led to a formal agreement but noted that a Memorandum of Understanding was being developed between partners undertaking City Region Deal measures and the Scottish Government and this would cover responsibility for control, oversight and other governance protocols. Mr Cleary then provided the Joint Committee with an update on the Housing; Digital; and Transportation elements of the additional funding agreement.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note the update on the additional funding; and
- (ii) to request that ONE representatives are copied into all correspondence between the constituent authorities and the Scottish Government with regards to the

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development of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding in relation to the additional funding of £254m.

**AT THIS JUNCTURE COUNCILLOR LAING ASSUMED THE CHAIR AND  
COUNCILLOR ROSS THOMSON MSP JOINED THE MEETING. AS PER STANDING  
ORDER 27 THE JOINT COMMITTEE WAS NOW QUORATE.**

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Chair declared an interest by virtue of her position as a Board member of ONE but remained in the meeting as per the requirements of the Standards Commission Dispensation provided to members of the Joint Committee on 9 August 2016.

**MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 10 JUNE 2016**

4. The Joint Committee had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 10 June 2016 for approval.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

To approve the minute as a correct record.

**DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS**

5. The Chair proposed that item 5 (Oil and Gas Technology Centre Business Plan) of today's agenda (item 8 of this minute) be considered with the press and public excluded.

**The Board resolved:-**

In terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the aforementioned item of business so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in paragraph 6 of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

**CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS - IN TERMS OF SECTION 50A(3)(A) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1973**

6. The Chair proposed that in terms of Section 50A(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 that the following item be considered with the press and public

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excluded as the information is deemed to be confidential in terms of Section 50A(3)(a) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 having been furnished by a government department upon terms which forbid disclosure.

**The Board resolved:-**

To exclude the press and public in terms of Section 50A(3)(a) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as the information is deemed to be confidential.

**ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL AGREEMENT**

7. The Joint Committee had before it a report by Richard Sweetnam (Head of Economic Development, ACC).

**The report recommended –**

that the Joint Committee

- a) Recommend to its Constituent Authorities (Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council) and to Opportunity North East to approve the Aberdeen City Region Deal Agreement; the Implementation Plan; the Financial Plan; and the Assurance Framework; and
- b) Recommend to its Constituent Authorities (Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council) and to Opportunity North East to approve that Aberdeenshire Council would act as the lead accountable body for the City Region Deal Joint Committee.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

To approve the recommendations as set out in the report.

**OIL AND GAS TECHNOLOGY CENTRE BUSINESS CENTRE**

8. The Joint Committee had before it a report by John-Paul Cleary outlining the business case for the Oil and Gas Technology Centre project within the innovation theme of the Aberdeen City Region Deal.

**The report recommended –**

That the Joint Committee approves the business case proposed in the report, subject to approval of the overall City Region Deal by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council; and approval of the overall City Region Deal by the UK Government and Scottish Government.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

To approve the recommendation as set out in the report.

**COUNCILLOR JENNIFER LAING, Chairperson.**

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<b>Report Name</b>	City Region Deal Progress Update
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Richard Sweetnam
<b>Report Author</b>	John-Paul Cleary
<b>Date of Report</b>	11 November 2011
<b>Governance</b>	City Region Deal Joint Committee

<b>1:</b>	<b>Purpose of the Report</b>
i.	To update the Joint Committee on the progress of the City Region Deal, its constituent workstreams and also of the work programme under the additional £254 million.

<b>2:</b>	<b>Recommendations for Action</b>
i.	It is recommended that the Joint Committee notes the content of the report and the progress made.

<b>3:</b>	<b>Summary of Key Information</b>
i.	The detailed information is contained in Appendix 1 – the Aberdeen City Region Deal Programme Dashboard.

<b>4:</b>	<b>Finance and Risk</b>
i.	There are no direct financial implications in relation to the progress updates provided.

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**ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL - PROGRAMME DASHBOARD**  
11 November 2016

Id	Theme / Project	Lead	Stage	Last Completed Milestone	Next Milestone	Next Milestone Target Date	Timeline	Budget	Resource	Notes
<b>1 Programme Workstreams</b>										
1.1	Governance and Approvals	John-Paul Cleary		Approval of City Deal Agreement by both Councils	Official launch of City Region Deal	TBC	G	G	G	
1.2	Programme Finances	Alan Wood					A	G	G	The financial plan for the Programme is in place and will be signed off by the two governments as part of the overall deal. Interim agreement between Aberdeenshire and OGTC for the first tranche of funds is in place, with a more substantive agreement being drawn up to cover the longer term. Timeline is amber as the risk remains that delays in signing the deal may affect OGTC timescales.
1.3	Communications & Marketing	Paul Smith		Communications Strategy presented to Joint Committee	CRD Launch event	TBC	G	G	G	Joint Aberdeen City Council / Aberdeenshire Council / ONE comms team in place. Lead identified and in place. Comms plan and schedule on Joint Committee agenda.
1.4	Benefits Realisation	Jamie Coventry					G	G	G	Economic Benefits Realisation dashboard to be developed
<b>2 Innovation</b>										
2.1	Oil & Gas Technology Centre	Jennifer Crow	Implement	CEO and Solution Centre Managers commence roles	First OGTC managed Solution Centres established	Dec 2016	G	A	G	Business Case in place and awaiting final go-head and release of government funding as part of the signing of the overall Deal. Project requires financial drawdown asap but risk remains around timing of funding release. Company set up and CEO and senior team in post.
2.2	Agri-Food and Nutrition Innovation Centre	Jennifer Crow	Define	Project Management / Implementation Group established	Draft Business Case	Dec 2016	G	G	G	Project team set up to manage the next steps. Currently researching innovation centre best practice and accessibility of support; market and demand testing of the concept.
2.3	Bio-Therapeutic Innovation Centre	Jennifer Crow	Define	Project Management / Implementation Group established	Draft Business Case	Dec 2016	G	G	G	Project team set up to manage the next steps which include demand testing and options appraisal to develop and shape the preferred model.
<b>3 Digital Infrastructure</b>										
3.1	Digital Infrastructure	Simon Haston	Define	Draft Business Case Developed	Release of draft Business Case for SG / UKG Review	14 Nov 2016	G	G	G	Gap analysis work complete. Draft business case developed and initial presentation of the key points to the Scottish Government. In discussions with Scottish Government to run as a precursor to forthcoming national digital connectivity programme.
<b>4 Transportation</b>										
4.1	Strategic Transport Appraisal	Paul Finch	Define	Budget management model agreed	Develop Transport Objectives under CRD	Dec 2016	G	G	G	Agreement reached between Transport Scotland and the Transport Workstream Group on how budgets will be managed. Workstream Group is currently working on defining the objectives and ambitions of the transport workstream in the City Region Deal. Update of ASAM model in progress.
<b>5 Internationalisation</b>										
5.1	Aberdeen Harbour Expansion	Liaison - John-Paul Cleary	Define	Marnie License Approval	Issue of HRO (Harbour Revision Order)	Dec 2016	A	G	G	Marine Licence has been approved and HRO approved by Minister and laid before Parliament Friday 28th October. 40 day period for ratification and approval means HRO in place by middle of December.
5.2	Aberdeen Harbour Expansion - External Roads	Hugh Murdoch	Define		Scoping and options appraisal	March 2017	G	A	G	Approach to scheduling the work has been agreed with the Harbour Board. Initial scoping and assessment will be carried out by March 2017. Construction work unlikely to begin until after harbour completion in 2020. Costs of the development need to be worked up.
5.3	Aberdeen Harbour Expansion - Other Infrastructure						G	G	G	Agreement has been reached to apportion budget to this workstream. State Aid will need to be considered for any internal works.
<b>Additional £254m</b>										
<b>6 Programme Workstreams</b>										

6.1	Governance and Approvals	Richard Sweetnam			Signing of MOU	Nov 2016	G	G	G	Final version of Memo of Understanding covering the additional £254m ready to sign.
<b>7 Housing</b>										
7.1	Housing	Neil Carnegie	Define	Development of Housing Infrastructure Fund Table	Submission of Housing Infrastructure Fund Tables to Scottish Government	30 Nov 2016	G	G	G	Identifying potential sites where the infrastructure fund may benefit developers, RSLs and the Councils. Housing Infrastructure Fund for both Councils must be submitted to Scottish Government along with Strategic Housing Investment Plans by 30 November 2016.
<b>8 Digital Infrastructure</b>										
8.1	Digital Infrastructure	Simon Haston	Define				G	G	G	This funding has been included in the main Digital Infrastructure business case
<b>9 Transportation</b>										
9.1	Laurencekirk Flyover	Derick Murray	Define	Transport Scotland procurement of design consultants	AMEY to commence DMRB studies		G	G	G	Transport Scotland have appointed AMEY for the next stages of design and scheme development.
9.2	Rail to Central Belt	Derick Murray	Define		Network Rail timetabling exercise		A	G	G	Scope and timings are yet to be determined.

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<b>Report Name</b>	Digital Progress Report
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Simon Haston
<b>Report Author</b>	Wendy Robertson
<b>Date of Report</b>	04/11/16
<b>Governance</b>	City Region Deal Joint Committee

<b>1:</b>	<b>Purpose of the Report</b>
<p><b>To update the board on the outcome of the Digital Gap analysis and the proposed solutions</b></p> <p>An extensive GAP analysis has been undertaken of existing and planned infrastructure in the region through a programme of desk research and interviews with infrastructure owners and service providers.</p> <p>An analysis was undertaken at a <i>premise level</i> of the current service availability in the region using published information and broadband availability checkers. This was undertaken for all premises in the City and an arc around the City covering the housing market area in the Shire stretching from Stonehaven in the south, Inverurie in the west and Ellon in the north.</p> <p>The results of the gap analysis highlighted significant gaps in coverage of fibre in both city and shire.</p>	

<b>2:</b>	<b>Recommendations for Action</b>
<p><b>The following options are recommended to address the findings of the gap analysis:</b></p> <p><i>Public Sector led approach</i></p> <p>An approach is to invest in Aberdeen City Council's and Aberdeenshire Council's own network infrastructure. In addition, discussions were held with other public sector bodies such as NHS to assess their plans.</p> <p>If the public sector demand for network infrastructure could be aggregated it may drive further commercial deployment in the region.</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council is investing in its own network infrastructure and has recently upgraded connectivity to schools to ultrafast fibre via SWAN. Aberdeenshire Council has its own radio based network serving all sites in its area and which will not be replaced in the</p>	

near future and is looking to coordinate activities with NHS with whom it is sharing premises.

However these actions alone will not achieve the aim of every business being able to access ultrafast and 97% of households having access to superfast (>30Mbps) services. Further investment is required to ensure a wider coverage in business and communities areas both in urban and rural areas.

#### *Stimulate Commercial led deployment*

Discussions with industry have revealed that proactive investment in new infrastructure will be limited in the near future and the challenges of coverage and speed remain. The key messages received were:

- Any expansion of the existing fibre footprints of the infrastructure providers (e.g. City Fibre, SSE Telecom) would require either a commitment by the public sector to use or extensive aggregation of private sector demand
- Innovative new fibre access providers (e.g. Gigaclear) will require some gap funding to ensure ubiquitous coverage in the Aberdeenshire housing market area. All have finite investment funds and all areas of the UK are seeking to attract commercial investment in their areas. The Aberdeen City Region is effectively competing to attract such inward investment.

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils continue to actively promote the region to the telecommunications operators and have been working with local trade bodies to stimulate and aggregate demand to encourage investment. In addition the public sector has extensive purchasing power that it can harness. Both Councils continue with such initiatives. However gaps in the market will still remain.

It is recommended that both a Public Sector led approach and an approach to stimulate Commercial Led approach to address the gaps in fibre coverage.

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are currently having on-going discussions with the Scottish Government regarding next steps.

### **3: Summary of Key Information**

The aim of this theme is to ensure that the City region has a world class digital infrastructure to ensure economic development, helping to build communities and provide excellent public services. A gap analysis showed that on 84% of premises had at least 30 Mbps. This is well short of comparable city regions. A number of options were assessed to address this using the City Region Deal funding. (detailed in the business case). The option that will provide most benefits is a regional procurement to address both business and residential gaps in broadband speed. This procurement should be undertaken in partnership with the Scottish government. A regional procurement would give sufficient scale to attract best value from the market. The solution is likely to be provided by a consortium of providers with specialism in different types of broadband delivery options. The procurement could start in February 2017 and the full deployment would be complete by January 2018.

**4: Finance and Risk**

It is planned that the digital infrastructure funding from both the City Region Deal and the additional £254 million Scottish Government Funding will be combined under this workstream.

Milestone	Date
Business Case issued to UKG & SG for formal Review	14 November 2016
Business Case Peer Review	5 – 12 December 2016
Business Case Review by Programme Board	5 January 2017
Business Case Approved by Joint Committee	20 January 2017
UKG / SG Approval of Business Case	January 2017
White Area in-fill procurement	Feb - August 2017
Complete white area in-fill	December 2018
Duct build procurement	Feb-April 2017
Duct build completed	January 2018

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## ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL: Powering Tomorrow's World

<b>Report</b>	Aberdeen City Region Deal – Communications Strategy and Plan
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council communications lead officers
<b>Report Author</b>	Takki Sulaiman / Kate Bond / Paul Smith
<b>Date of Report</b>	6 October 2016
<b>Governance</b>	Joint Committee

<b>1:</b>	<b>Purpose of the Report</b>
i.	To finalise the City Region Deal communications strategy, as previously reported, and outline the plan for ongoing activity.

<b>2:</b>	<b>Recommendations for Action</b>
i.	It is recommended that the Joint Committee approves the communications strategy and project plan as set out in this this report, with actions to be developed and carried out by the project working group led by the two councils and Opportunity North East (ONE).

<b>3:</b>	<b>Background and Main issues</b>
<u>Background and communications activity to date</u>	
i.	The public narrative of the Aberdeen City Region has been one that has been inextricably linked to the success of the Oil and Gas sector.
ii.	It is an economic success story for Scotland and the UK, generating over £18bn per year and between 2003 and 2013 this economy created 42,000 jobs, double the Scottish average. In the same period economic output (GVA) grew by 94% more than double the Scottish total of 44%.
iii.	Following increasing concerns about the impact of falling oil and gas prices, discussions concerning an Aberdeen City Region Deal process gained significant national and international media currency as a result of the Oil and Gas summit held in Aberdeen on 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2015.

3:	Background and Main issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="272 248 1359 427">iv. In addition to the need to invest in regional infrastructure, given the anticipated productive lifespan of the North Sea fields combined with the high costs of recovery of oil and gas in the North Sea calls were made to help support the sector, and the extended supply chain, to both internationalise and diversify.</li> <li data-bbox="272 427 1359 573">v. An initial communications and engagement strategy was formally adopted in October 2015 with the objectives mainly geared towards building public, stakeholder and political support for an Aberdeen City Region Deal.</li> <li data-bbox="272 573 1359 797">vi. The <a href="http://www.abzdeal.com">www.abzdeal.com</a> website was subsequently established and a social media campaign using the hashtag ABZdeal was utilised across the twittersphere and all communication channels to build the conversation around the City Region Deal. This campaign relied heavily upon the existing networks of stakeholders as well as the combined 40,000 plus following of the two councils.</li> <li data-bbox="272 797 1359 1021">vii. This initial integrated communications and engagement strategy and plan helped to ensure that the case for a City Region Deal was heard by the right audiences and at the right times. Significant media coverage was gained and helped to build wider public support and understanding about the benefits of a City Region Deal not just to the Region but for Scotland and the UK as a whole.</li> <li data-bbox="272 1021 1359 1267">viii. In December 2015 both councils approved a Regional Economic Strategy containing four key strands: Investment in Infrastructure, Innovation, Inclusive Economic Growth and Internationalisation. The strategy was rooted in capitalising on the advantages from North Sea oil and gas and delivering a more balanced and resilient economy as a result of world class innovation and competitive business.</li> <li data-bbox="272 1267 1359 1413">ix. The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) provided the framework for the future economic development of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. The City Region Deal is a key component in making sure this strategy is delivered.</li> <li data-bbox="272 1413 1359 1559">x. Significantly the strategy also aimed to support a broadening of the economy across other sectors – including renewables, tourism, food and drink, fisheries, agriculture, life sciences and the creative industries.</li> <li data-bbox="272 1559 1359 1637">xi. Communications activity around the RES therefore underpinned the work on the City Region Deal.</li> <li data-bbox="272 1637 1359 1816">xii. During the course of 2015 significant efforts led by the two councils, industry and other stakeholders were made to develop a package of investment and initiatives which resulted in the signing of a Heads of Terms agreement in January 2016 – subject to the development of detailed business cases and implementation plans.</li> <li data-bbox="272 1816 1359 2040">xiii. Specifically it was identified that a range of supply-side issues were constraining Aberdeen’s competitiveness and this included digital and transport connectivity, the need to boost innovation, the need to develop a better functioning housing market and expand the harbour. Improved infrastructure, in addition to the investments already planned for, was required to secure the city’s long term</li> </ul>

<b>3:</b>	<b>Background and Main issues</b>
	<p>economic wellbeing and its place as a successful international business environment.</p> <p>xiv. In addition to the £250m identified in the City Region Deal the Scottish Government announced that an additional £254m would be available to support the implementation of some elements of the original proposals that would not be funded within parameters of the signed Heads of Terms.</p> <p>xv. The task of a new communications strategy and project plan is to promote understanding of and engagement with the programme amongst the full of range of audiences along the lifecycle stages of the 10 year programme.</p>

<b>4:</b>	<b>Purpose and communications objectives</b>
	<p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>To implement a communications strategy and project plan that will support the development and implementation of a successful City Region Deal that in turn supports the economic and wellbeing aspirations contained within the Regional Economic Strategy.</p> <p>Communication objectives will be evaluated and shaped through the course of the project, but in the early stages should focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Building public and stakeholder awareness of the lifecycle of the CRD;</li> <li>ii. Continuing to build public and stakeholder engagement, understanding and support for the key aims of the deal;</li> <li>iii. Communicating milestones relating to major projects and specific deliverables;</li> <li>iv. Building stakeholder awareness of how the deal will benefit a wide range of interests within the city region and the overarching focus on improving the long term prospects of the region;</li> <li>v. Showcasing the innovation, opportunity and strength of spirit in the region.</li> <li>vi. Explaining the relationship between the City Region Deal and the proposed £254m expenditure announced by the Scottish Government in January 2016.</li> </ul>

**5: Key messages, audiences and dependencies**

Key Messages

Key messages should underpin all communication and be clear in all activity. It is important to identify a limited number of key messages to avoid these being diluted. These should include:

- i. The CRD will support world class innovation;
- ii. Key partners in the CRD are working in harmony to deliver a vibrant long term future for the region;
- iii. Enhancing the region's global reach and connectivity, both physical and digital, will be at the core of the CRD projects.

Audiences

- iv. The public of the region;
- v. Businesses, stakeholders and partner organisations;
- vi. Media, influencers and other opinion formers;
- vii. Councillors and other elected members;
- viii. Current and future suppliers;
- ix. Current and potential investors;
- x. The wider business and tourism community, national and international

Dependencies

- xi. The ongoing communications strategy and plan mirror the phases and sensitivities inherent within the programme and implementation plan;
- xii. Elements of communication activity will be shaped by projects undertaken by third parties, with a partnership approach to communication required.

**6: Ways of working: Communications Protocol**

- i. Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council work within the governance frameworks of their respective organisations and the laws, statutes, regulation and guidance governing local government in Scotland.
- ii. Communications activity is therefore guided by local policies and standing orders as well as national regulations contained within the various Acts detailing local government activity and the conduct of elections.
- iii. In addition given the complexity of activity it is important that there is clarity over the identification of a project that may or may not be directly related to the CRD programme. Activity that is identified as programme related will need to be 'badged' clearly as part of the CRD.

<b>6:</b>	<b>Ways of working: Communications Protocol</b>
iv.	A number of projects contain funding from a variety of sources and each partner organisation will need to be involved in the communications planning. This will ensure support is credited but also ensure that the appropriate agency leads on the communications activity.
v.	For this reason as well as the principle of maximum transparency and coordination a communications protocol has been devised and is enclosed at appendix 1.
vi.	It is intended to be a coordinating tool to help the range of partners involved in the City Region Deal to work together to maximise engagement, awareness and support.

<b>7:</b>	<b>Strategic approach and communications plan</b>
<p><u>External communications</u></p> <p>External communication will be vital to build engagement and understanding of the CRD and its different elements, unified under the CRD 'brand'.</p> <p>To ensure co-ordination and an integrated approach a single communications project plan, closely aligned to the Implementation Plan held by the PMO, has been developed and will be maintained on an ongoing basis. Monthly communications planning and review meetings have been introduced.</p> <p>An integrated approach to communication is vital, utilising traditional and digital channels available to CRD partners.</p> <p>External communication will employ the following tactics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. News: Traditional, online and broadcast coverage of news and key milestones;</li> <li>ii. Features: Traditional, online and broadcast features relating to the objectives of the CRD;</li> <li>iii. Thought leadership: Traditional, online and event-based opinion/knowledge-led opportunities;</li> <li>iv. Video: Regular programme of video content, charting progress and future activity;</li> <li>v. Digital: Expanding reach through engaging and regular content across all partner social channels in addition to regular updates to CRD website. The re-introduction of a regular electronic newsletter is also planned;</li> <li>vi. Influence: Developing an influencers strategy to increase awareness about the programme and its significance to the economy of the local area, Scotland and the UK is</li> </ul>	

## 7: Strategic approach and communications plan

- recommended. Consideration should be given to public affairs support;
- vii. Engagement: Briefings for partners, stakeholders, MPs and MSPs were well received and a formal process for briefing key stakeholders across the programme's lifecycle should be established;
  - viii. Marketing collateral: A full suite of marketing material to be developed (print, video and animation) to reflect deliverables and timescales;
  - ix. Outdoor: As buildings and locations are identified the opportunity arises for information boards and building 'wraps' to promote the activity on the site and the fact it is part of the City Region Deal programme. These need to be factored into the project planning process.

### Internal communications

Each partner has access to a workforce, many of whom might also be stakeholders and/or resident in the region. A range of internal communications materials will be developed, including:

- i. Intranet updates;
- ii. Staff engagement events;
- iii. Repurposing and sharing of external communication material, including digital newsletter and video content.

### Evaluation

A record of coverage will be maintained using a media monitoring service that will cover most of the traditional media and key social media platforms. The ABZdeal hashtag also enables us to monitor the conversation on twitter. This will be supplemented by free online alert tools. A record will be maintained of media releases issued and the level of interest from journalists.

The use of google analytics aligned to the CRD website will identify traffic and the relative balance of interest to help shape ongoing communications.

A highlight report covering all the available metrics will be produced to coincide with the communication reporting and updates to the Joint Committee.

**8:** Proposed short term actions

The short term actions are proposed as follows:-

- i. Populate CRD communications plan;
- ii. Schedule ongoing monthly communications planning meetings;
- iii. Review the existing content of the [www.abzdeal.com](http://www.abzdeal.com) website;
- iv. Expand content of the website, including video and animation;
- v. Prepare CRD launch activity

**9:** Proposed medium term actions

Medium term actions are proposed as follows:-

- i. Review the ABZdeal brand and develop guidelines;
- ii. Plan production of a range of other short to medium term assets such as a CRD 'factfile' and the CRD video;
- iii. Keep the strategy and plan updated throughout the life of the programme.

**10:** Finance

- i. A separate communications and engagement budget has not been allocated and will need to be bid for once the communications project plan has been completed;
- ii. A full communications and engagement programme will have staff time and costs attached to it. The communications project group will apportion tasks to each of the partners and stakeholders and bring the costs to the joint committee.

**11:** Risks

The following high level potential risks have been identified:

- i. There is a significant reputation risk for the City Region Deal partners if key developments are not communicated in an accurate and timely manner;
- ii. The cohesion of the working relationship could be harmed if each partner does not coordinate the release of information;
- iii. Should the linkage between the project plan and the communications plan not be maintained at an operational level then there is risk that out of date or incorrect information could be

<b>11:</b>	<b>Risks</b>
<p>communicated.</p> <p>The above risks can be mitigated by agreeing to proceed to develop a joint and transparent communications project plan that is regularly updated.</p>	



## **City Region Deal – communications protocol [APPENDIX 1]**

### **Introduction**

The communications protocol has been developed to ensure a joined-up and consistent approach is taken to the provision of public information, general promotion and all media relations associated with Aberdeen's City Region Deal.

Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and ONE will jointly develop and deliver a communications and engagement project plan for the Aberdeen City Region Deal. The communications strategy and project plan will guide the overarching programme of communications activity and be the responsibility of the Head of Communications & Promotion (Aberdeen City Council), the Head of Customer Communication & Improvement (Aberdeenshire Council) and ONE's nominated representative.

The teams will use a range of tools to communicate messages to residents, focused on stakeholder engagement, media relations, events and speaking opportunities, supported by social media. This protocol covers all activity set out in the emerging communications and engagement strategy and applies to all key partners actively supporting CRD.

### **Communication principles:**

Whilst equal emphasis will be placed by the communications teams on the development and implementation of an overarching communications and engagement project plan, the council chairing the Joint Committee will take the overall coordinating role for communications activity.

Both councils will nominate a City Region Deal communications lead as will ONE. They will work together to formulate key plans and manage all communications and engagement activity on behalf of the partners. Activity will be overseen by the respective Heads of Communications in both councils, but the chairing council will be responsible for regular reporting.

As supporting partner, Scottish Enterprise may also wish to nominate a communications representative to sit on the Communications Project Planning Group. The two governments will also be invited to provide representatives.

The City Region Deal partners will adopt an approach of openness and transparency with key audiences and will be proactive in our delivery of news and information.

In all public statements, press releases and public information, the activity should always be referred to as the City Region Deal.

A boilerplate will be agreed in advance which should be used in all communications as a standard paragraph to aid people's understanding of the City Region Deal, what it seeks to achieve, the process and key partners.

**Press releases:**

All press releases relating to the City Region Deal will be shared with the councils and ONE communications teams, and they will seek appropriate authority from key partners and relevant organisations.

All press releases relating to the City Region Deal will include quotes from a senior councillor at Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and ONE. Where appropriate, supporting quotations will be gained from partners organisations, stakeholders and influencers.

**Media responses:**

The full Programme Communications Group should be advised of any approaches from the media in relation to the City Region Deal. Media responses should be shared in advance with the partners, to allow adequate time for consideration and approval.

**Approvals:**

Neither Council nor ONE will issue any public statement relating to the City Region Deal without gaining the approval of the other key partners.

It is possible that during interviews on other topics partners will be asked direct questions about the City Region Deal. If that is the case the interviewees will if possible work with the agreed lines.

Communications and engagement activity will be agreed in advance, with reasonable time set aside to gain approvals. Where this is planned activity, a minimum of 48 hours will be given for approval.

Where a response to the media is required within a specific deadline, every effort will be made to seek approval of all partners (2 councils, ONE, Scottish Enterprise and the two governments). Where this is not possible, the CE of the council responding to the media enquiry must give express permission for the response to be given without the approval of the other partners.

**Interview requests:**

Where there are requests for interviews from the media, generally the leader of the Council (City Council), Co-Leader of the Council (Aberdeenshire Council) or a representative of ONE will be asked to undertake these. Opportunities for responding to media requests for interviews will be shared with the lead partners. For proactive communications activity this will be set out against each project in the communications project plan.

The Communications Project Planning Group will seek to work with the two governments to ensure these arrangements are reciprocated at all layers of the City Region Deal governance process.

Where the key spokespeople are not available, the interviews will be offered in the first instance to the Chief Executives of both councils' and Joint Committee members however usually officers will only be asked to undertake interviews if there is a need for technical or specialist knowledge.

Partner organisations and stakeholders will be informed as to the opportunity to ensure coordination and where appropriate the media will be directed to obtain interviews directly from wider stakeholders.

### **Social media:**

Hashtag #ABZdeal should be consistently used by all partners throughout social media on twitter

### **Keeping councillors and partners informed:**

Each partner organisation will be responsible for keeping their councillors/members informed of all activity, as per their agreed protocols. An online newsroom and microsite has been established which is being used to store and distribute key assets to councillors and other key stakeholders.

### **Appointment of external consultants covering communications, public affairs and engagement:**

From time to time over the lifetime of the City Region Deal consultants or contractors may be appointed to support communications, public affairs and stakeholder engagement activities. Such activity will need to be coordinated with the communications strategy and plan developed by the two councils and their partners.

Their work should mirror the communication principles set out in this protocol to ensure a consistent and joined-up approach between the two councils and the agencies or contractors involved. Any planned engagement activity arranged through the contracts should be advised to the Heads of Communications to ensure that supporting media activity can be arranged with clear and consistent messaging and timing.

### **Pre-election periods:**

During a pre-election period, specific guidance comes into effect, which determines the approach taken on all media matters. This guidance will be

published in advance of all elections and will replace this protocol for a temporary period. Even if the media/public engagement activity involves partner organisations if there is a perception, as set out in the electoral guidance, that activity is deemed to be supportive of a political group then it should be deferred until after an election.

**More information:**

For more information about this media protocol, or for media advice and support, please contact Takki Sulaiman, Head of Communications & Promotions (Aberdeen City Council) on 01224 522615 / [tsulaiman@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:tsulaiman@aberdeencity.gov.uk) ; Kate Bond, Head of Customer Communication & Improvement (Aberdeenshire Council) on 01224 664405 / [kate.bond@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:kate.bond@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) ; or Paul Smith, External and Internal Communications Manager (Aberdeen City Council) on 01224 523188 / [paulsmith1@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:paulsmith1@aberdeencity.gov.uk) .

***Updated in June 2016 from October 2015 original***

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