

# ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

ABERDEEN, 21 August 2020. Minute of Meeting of the ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Laing, Chairperson; Councillor Jim Gifford, Vice-Chairperson; Councillors Boulton, Lumsden, Argyle, Petrie, Professor Stephen Logan, Mr Patrick Machray, OBE and Sir Ian Wood; .

**The agenda, reports and meeting recordings associated with this minute can be located [here](#).**

**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.**

## **DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

1. The Chairperson proposed that the Joint Committee consider agenda item 8 (Bio-Hub – Verbal Update) with the press and public excluded.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting at item 8, so as to avoid disclosure of information of the classes described in paragraph 6 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act.

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2. Members were requested to intimate any declarations of interest in respect of the items on today's agenda, thereafter the following were intimated:-
  - (1) Councillor Argyle declared an interest in item 7 (Strategic Transport Appraisal Update) by virtue of him being a Council appointed member and Vice Chair of Nestrans Board. He considered that the nature of his interest did not require him to leave the meeting during the consideration of this item;
  - (2) Councillor Lumsden declared an interest in item 8 (Bio-Hub – Verbal Update) by virtue of him being a Council appointed Board Member of NHS Grampian. He considered that the nature of his interest did not require him to leave the meeting during the consideration of this item; and
  - (2) Sir Ian Wood, Professor Stephen Logan and Pat Machray declared an interest in item 8 (Bio-Hub – Verbal Update) by virtue of them being Directors 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.

## **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 24 JULY 2020**

3. The Joint Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 24 July 2020, for approval.

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**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the minute.

**GRANT OFFER LETTER REPORTS**

4. With reference to article 5 of the minute of the previous meeting of 24 July 2020, the Joint Committee had before it a report by the Programme Manager which outlined the conditions set out in the Grant Offer Letter for 2020/21 totalling £51,320,000 and provided an update on Benefits Realisation.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee –

- (a) review and approve the Implementation Plan;
- (b) review and approve the Benefits Realisation Plan; and
- (c) review and approve the Financial Forecast Table.

Alan Wood, Aberdeenshire Council responded to questions from members in relation to the Oil and Gas Training Centre funding reprofiling.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations.

**DIGITAL - GAP ANALYSIS PROGRESS REPORT**

5. The Joint Committee had before it a report by Wendy Robertson which provided an update in relation to the progress to date of the digital infrastructure Gap Analysis for the region.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee note the progress update and request the Outline Business Case be brought to November's Joint Committee.

The Joint Committee acknowledged that only 3% of Aberdeenshire premises could access full fibre services and that there was a requirement to improve this significantly as a matter of urgency. In response Wendy Robertson advised that the detailed GAP analysis for the City/Shire had identified a number of high level options, although they were awaiting the outcome of the R100 Court case in September and Aberdeenshire Council's meeting with Openreach to discuss their digital offering announcement, prior to the preparation and submission of the outline business case at November's meeting.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation.

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**STRATEGIC TRANSPORT APPRAISAL UPDATE**

6. The Joint Committee had before it a report by Paul Finch, Strategy Manager, Nestrans which provided details on the progression of the Strategic Transport Appraisal, focussing on the consultation currently being undertaken on the Regional Transport Strategy and priority transport interventions.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee note the responses to the consultation exercise.

Paul Finch provided details on the seven interventions which were identified as suitable for further progression with support through CRD funding:-

1. Active Travel linking to, and within, the City Centre;
2. New Railway Stations on existing Lines;
3. Strategic Public Transport Corridor Schemes linked with Park and Ride Sites;
4. Trunk Road improvement – Ellon to Toll of Birness, and thereafter to Peterhead/Fraserburgh;
5. Local Road improvements on A92 corridor – Wellington Road, links to Aberdeen South Harbour;
6. Westhill Corridor – early consideration of connectivity and development pressures
7. Improvement of Inter-City Rail connections, to Central Belt and Inverness, including rail freight opportunities

During discussion, the following was noted:-

- that the Regional Transport Strategy consultation will end in October 2020 and that a business case will be submitted to the Joint Committee thereafter;
- that timescales for each project would be included with the business case; and
- that the strategy had been aligned to City and Shire Local Development Plans.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation.

**In accordance with the decision recorded under article 1 of this minute, the following item of business was considered in private with the press and public excluded.**

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**BIO HUB - VERBAL UPDATE**

7. The Joint Committee received an update from Richard Sweetnam, Aberdeen City Council and Alan Wood, Aberdeenshire Council in relation to the Bio-Hub Aberdeen Project.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to agree in accordance with its powers under Term of Reference number 6, that an interest free loan of £2M be provided for the BioHub project from within the Aberdeen City Region Deal Programme Budget, with repayment due only when funds are required to deliver other approved ACRD projects;
  - (ii) to agree that the repayment of the loan would be guaranteed by a third party, and that Opportunity North East (ONE) be asked to seek ONE Board approval to guarantee the loan (to a maximum sum of £2 million), less any additional funding that is subsequently secured from external sources, including the Scottish Government or the UK Government, should repayment to ACRD be required over the 10-year period of the Deal;
  - (iii) to instruct officers from both Local Authorities and members of the ONE team to liaise with BioAberdeen Ltd to draft the legal agreement in relation to the loan and the guarantee;
  - (iv) to delegate authority to Aberdeenshire Council's Section 95 Officer on behalf of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Joint Committee and the Chair of ONE to sign the legal agreement to provide the loan facility to BioAberdeen Ltd; and
  - (v) to note that representatives from the Joint Committee would continue to pursue a meeting with relevant Cabinet Secretaries and Government Ministers to discuss additional funding for the BioHub project.
- **COUNCILLOR JENNY LAING, Chairperson**