

# ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

ABERDEEN, 6 September 2024. Minute of Meeting of the ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Ian Yuill, Chairperson; Councillor Anne Stirling, Vice-Chairperson; Councillors Christian Allard, Gillian Owen and Gwyneth Petrie; and Professor George Boyne, Stanley Morrice (as substitute for Jennifer Crow) and Sir Ian Wood.

Also in Attendance:- Stuart Bews, Alan McKay, Ross Stevenson, Aigul Gray, Jess Anderson, Mark Masson and Lynis Masson (Aberdeen City Council); Councillor John Cox, Alan Wood, Paul Macari, Mary Beattie, Sarah Rochester and Jack Rigby (Aberdeenshire Council); Rab Dickson and Paul Finch (NESTRANS); and Lindsay McKenzie (Opportunity North East).

**The agenda, reports and recording of the meeting 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.**

## WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1. The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Clerk advised that apologies for absence had been intimated from Jennifer Crow and Julie Wood.

## DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS (IF ANY)

2. The Chairperson proposed that the Joint Committee consider item 9 (Digital Connectivity – Memorandum of Understanding), with the press and public excluded from the meeting.

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

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

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3. Members were requested to intimate any declarations of interest or transparency statements in respect of the items on today's agenda, thereafter the following was intimated:-

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- (1) Stanley Morrice on behalf of himself, Sir Ian Wood and Professor George Boyne made a transparency statement indicating that they had a connection to any issues affecting Opportunity North East, in particular matters relating to the Food Hub, BioAberdeen and the new Energy Transition Zone (ETZ), which may arise during the meeting, by virtue of them being Board Members of ONE and Sir Ian Wood also being a Board Member of ETZ Ltd. However, having applied the objective test he indicated that they did not consider that they had an interest to declare and would remain in the meeting. This was because, in practice, funding was allocated by agreement with government and in line with the tripartite agreement;
- (2) Councillor Owen made a transparency statement, by virtue of being a Board Member of Opportunity North East. Having applied the objective test she had concluded that she did not have an interest to declare and she would remain in the meeting; and
- (3) Councillor Allard made a transparency statement, by virtue of being a Board Member of Opportunity North East. Having applied the objective test he had concluded that he did not have an interest to declare and he would remain in the meeting.

**MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 10 MAY 2024, FOR APPROVAL**

4. The Joint Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 10 May 2024, for approval.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the minute.

**ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL QUARTERLY DASHBOARD UPDATE**

5. With reference to article 6 of the minute of the previous meeting of 10 May 2024, the Joint Committee had before it a report which provided an update in relation to the progress of the last quarter of the Aberdeen City Region Deal Programme under the headings Governance, Milestones, Benefits and Finance. The report also included a Programme Dashboard and a detailed quarterly Financial Summary in Tables 1 to 5.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee notes the content of the quarterly Programme Dashboard.

The Joint Committee heard from Stuart Bews, ACRD Programme Manager who highlighted the key information from the report, specifically regarding the progress on the construction relating to Seedpod, advising that it would be completed by the end of 2024 with a launch event and opening being held around March/April 2025.

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In relation to BioHub occupancy, Stuart advised that there were currently two significant tenants but discussions were ongoing.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation.

### **EXTERNAL TRANSPORTATION LINKS TO ABERDEEN SOUTH HARBOUR – PROGRESS REPORT**

6. With reference to article 9 of the minute of the previous meeting of 10 May 2024, the Joint Committee had before it a report by Ross Stevenson, Senior Engineer which provided an update on timescales and the project finance costs.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee –

- (a) note the ongoing discussions with both Governments with regard to the Outline Business Case;
- (b) note the progress of the scheme with regard to the ongoing detailed design work, Planning Application, and the progression of the Compulsory Purchase Order; and
- (c) note the ongoing consideration of traffic management measures restricting access by Heavy Good Vehicles to Torry and Cove via the Coast Road, and the requirement for any unresolved objections to be reported to the Aberdeen City Council Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

The Joint Committee heard from Alan McKay, Team Leader Roads Project who provided a summary of the report, specifically regarding design refinement at the Hareness coast road junction, the planning application process, noting that decision in this regard would be taken in the Autumn and the implications an disruption relating to traffic management

In response to a question, Mr McKay indicated that the project at this time would be fully funded from the budget that was allocated.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that any changes or potential risks with the project would be reported to members; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained within the report, outlined above.

### **ACRD INTERNAL AUDIT ACTION PLAN**

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7. The Joint Committee had before it a report which provided an update on the decisions taken by the Audit Committees of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council by way of an Action Plan of all agreed actions.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee –

- (a) notes progress made towards implementing agreed recommendations of the Internal Audit report dated 25 March 2024 and;
- (b) instructs the Aberdeen City Region Deal Programme Manager to continue to report on progress at each Joint Committee until all the agreed recommendations of the Internal Audit report have been accepted as implemented by the Internal Audit team.

Stuart Bews provided a summary of the report and responded to questions from members, noting that the annual benefits realisation report would be submitted along with the annual report to the next meeting in November 2024.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations contained within the report, outlined above.

**In accordance with Article 2 of this minute, the following item was considered with the press and public excluded.**

**DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

8. The Joint Committee had before it a report which advised that the Aberdeen City Region Deal Programme Management Office had been informed verbally by Scottish Government officials that the Scottish Government would not be able to commit any of the unallocated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Digital Connectivity Funds during this financial year.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee agree that a letter should be written to Deputy First Minister from the Chairperson of the Joint Committee seeking clarification on access to Memorandum of Understanding Funding.

Stuart Bews provided a summary of the report.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to agree that a letter should be written to the Deputy First Minister from the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Joint Committee seeking clarification on access to Memorandum of Understanding Funding; and

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- (ii) to note that the Aberdeen City Region Deal Programme Manager and Head of Planning and Economy, Aberdeenshire Council were to meet with the Deputy Director of the Digital Division, Scottish Government to discuss the MOU.
- **COUNCILLOR IAN YUILL, Chairperson**