

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE

04 FEBRUARY, 2022

Present: Councillors P Argyle, A Kille (Chair) and G Petrie (Aberdeenshire Council);

Councillors M Boulton, G Graham (as substitute for Councillor Laing) and R Houghton (Aberdeen City Council); and

Mrs J Craw, Sir Ian Wood (ONE) and Professor S Olivier (as substitute for Professor G Boyne)

Apologies: Councillor J Laing and Professor G Boyne.

Officers: Aberdeenshire Council – Mr A Wood, Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services, Mr P Macari, Head of Service, Planning & Economy, Ms M Beattie, Head of Finance, Ms S Rochester, Service Manager, Customer & Digital Services; Ms A Gibbs, Principal Solicitor, Ms A McLeod, Committee Officer

Aberdeen City Council – Ms J Richards Wood, Programme Manager, Ms A Gray, PMO Support Officer, Ms W Robertson, Digital Lead, Mr A MacKay, Team Leader, Roads Projects.

ONE – Mr N Anderson, Communications Officer.

In attendance: Mr P Finch and Mr R Dickson, NESTRANS; Mr A McEwan, CityFibre.

1. SEDERUNT AND DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Apologies were intimated in respect of Councillor Laing, Aberdeen City Council and Professor G Boyne, ONE.

Sir Ian Wood, Mrs Craw and Professor Olivier declared an interest in items 4 and 6, specifically in terms of any issues affecting Opportunity North East (ONE), including the Food Hub and Bio Aberdeen, or the new Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) which may arise in the discussion, by virtue of them being Board Members of ONE. They considered that the nature of their interest did not require them to leave the meeting during consideration of the items. Councillor Kille advised that he had a connection to items 4 and 6 by virtue of being a Board Member of ONE. However, having applied the objective test he had concluded that he had no interest to declare.

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.
- (B) Exempt Information - The Joint Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 50A (2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting for Items 6 and 7 of the business below on account of the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in Paragraphs 6 and 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.”

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE OF 12 NOVEMBER 2021

The Joint Committee had before it and **approved** as a correct record, the Minute of Meeting of the Joint Committee of 12 November, 2021.

- (a) Arising from Item 8 of the Minute – the Joint Committee **agreed** that the meeting dates for 2022/23 be confirmed as follow:
10 June, 2022,
9 September, 2022,
18 November, 2022,
3 February 2023;
- (b) Arising from Item 4 of the Minute, Mrs Craw, ONE confirmed that in addition to Mr Stanely Morris, Professor Steve Olivier had been appointed as a substitute member of ONE. The Chair welcomed Professor Olivier to the meeting, who was in attendance as substitute for Professor Boyne.

4. ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE

The Joint Committee had before it and **noted** a report dated 4 February, 2022 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.

In respect of the External Links to Aberdeen South Harbour project update, officers were asked to provide some assurances around the timescales for the project, and in particular whether there was any opportunity for an acceleration of the timescales. It was noted that a revised Strategic Business case had been submitted to UK/SG in December 2021, and once the design work was commissioned, an updated and re-profiled timeline and financial projection would be submitted. A further update was

requested on this issue to the next meeting of the Joint Committee, in order to provide some comfort that a potential acceleration of the timescales was being actively considered.

5. CITY NETWORK EXTENSION PROJECT

The Joint Committee had before it a report dated 4 February, 2022 by the Head of Planning and Economy, Aberdeenshire Council informing the Joint Committee that the City Network Extension project under the Digital theme had been completed, and highlighting the benefits realised.

Mr Allan McEwan, CityFibre was in attendance and made a presentation on the Gigabit City Aberdeen Project, advising that UK wide, CityFibre had committed £4bn to roll out future proofed full fibre digital infrastructure to around 30% of the UK market by 2025. In November, 2021, the City Network Extension project had completed the last milestone and connected 57 public sector sites including schools, libraries and other public buildings in the city utilising Aberdeen City Region Deal funding. This funding had attracted a £59 million investment to the city by CityFibre, making Aberdeen a Gigabit City, and the new infrastructure laid the foundation for further connectivity, including the roll out of 5G.

Mr McEwan responded to questions from Members in relation to progress in Aberdeen, compared to other cities in Scotland, noting that Aberdeen was the first Gigabit City announced in Scotland and the first to get underway, and was now one of the best digitally connected cities in terms of connectivity in the UK. There was comment from Members that the installation works by the contractors had been carried out efficiently and with a minimum of disruption and were received very positively.

The Chair thanked Mr McEwan for an interesting and informative presentation.

Thereafter, the Joint Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) To note the completion of the City Network Extension project;and
- (2) To note the benefits which the project had achieved to date.

6. BIO HUB – VERBAL UPDATE

The Joint Committee noted an update by Mrs Craw on ongoing work and discussions in relation to progress with and funding arrangements for the Bio Hub Aberdeen Project.

7. DUCT NETWORK EXTENSION CHANGE REQUEST

The Joint Committee had before it a report dated 4 February, 2022 by the Head of Planning & Economy, Aberdeenshire Council, seeking the approval of the Joint Committee to use identified savings from Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Duct Network Extension project towards the construction of a Phase 3.

The Joint Committee, having considered the report, **agreed** to approve the change request submitted, which would allow delivery of Phase 3.

Prior to the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair, having advised that this was his final meeting of the Joint Committee, as he would not be standing for re-election at the forthcoming local government elections in May 2022, thanked the Members of the Joint Committee for their support and commitment to the Joint Committee and wished the Members well for the future. Thanks were given to the Chair for his chairmanship over the last year.

Councillor Andy Kille, Chair

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