

# ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

ABERDEEN, 10 June 2022. Minute of Meeting of the ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Alex Nicoll, Chairperson; Councillor Anne Stirling, Vice-Chairperson; Councillors Miranda Radley and Ian Yuill (Aberdeen City Council); Councillors Mark Findlater and Gwyneth Petrie (Aberdeenshire Council); and Professor George Boyne, Stanley Morrice (as substitute for Jennifer Crow) and Sir Ian Wood (Opportunity North East).

In Attendance: Richard Sweetnam, Julie Richards-Wood, Graham Chandler, Ross Stevenson, Alan McKay, Aigul Gray, Mark Masson (Aberdeen City Council); Councillor John Cox, Alan Wood, Mary Beattie and Alex MacLeod (Aberdeenshire Council); Lindsay McKenzie (Opportunity North East); Paul Finch (NESTRANS); and Damian Briody, Darius Astell and James Dunshea (Transport Scotland/Network Rail)

**The agenda and reports 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, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES**

1. The Clerk welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Joint Committee following the recent Local Government Elections. Members then introduced themselves.

The Clerk intimated that apologies for absence had been submitted by Jennifer Crow and that Stanley Morrice would be substituting at today's meeting. Apologies were also submitted by Jim Savege.

## **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON**

2. The Clerk sought nominations for Chairperson of the Joint Committee, whereupon:-

Councillor Findlater, seconded by Councillor Stirling, moved:-  
that Councillor Alex Nicoll be appointed as Chairperson of the Joint Committee.

There were no other nominations.

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

to appoint Councillor Nicoll as Chairperson.

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**At this juncture, Councillor Nicoll assumed the chair.**

**APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRPERSON**

3. The Chairperson sought nominations for the appointment of Vice Chairperson of the Joint Committee, whereupon:-

The Chairperson, seconded by Councillor Yuill, moved:-  
that Councillor Anne Stirling be appointed as Vice Chairperson of the Joint Committee.

There were no other nominations.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to appoint Councillor Stirling as Vice Chairperson.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS**

4. Sir Ian Wood, Professor George Boyne and Stanley Morrice advised that they would have a connection in terms of any issue affecting Opportunity North East (ONE), specifically in relation to the Food Hub, Bio Aberdeen or the new Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) which may arise during discussion, by virtue of them being Board Members of ONE, however having applied the objective test they did not consider that they had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.

**MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 4 FEBRUARY 2022, FOR APPROVAL**

5. The Joint Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 4 February 2022, for approval.

In relation to article 4 (Aberdeen City Region Deal Quarterly Progress Update), the Joint Committee heard from Alan McKay, Team Leader, Roads Projects who provided an update on the External Transportation Links to Aberdeen South Harbour project, making particularly reference to the tendering process for the appointment of the Technical Specialist Advisers to take forward the next stages of the project in June 2022.

During discussion, it was acknowledged that maximum effort was required to accelerate the works programme to deliver the access routes to the South Harbour within an agreed timeframe.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that an update report on the External Transportation Links to Aberdeen South Harbour project to include details of a timeline/programme of works would be submitted to the meeting on 9 September 2022;

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- (ii) that officers circulate to all members, the External Transportation Links to Aberdeen South Harbour Updated Strategic Business Case including corresponding papers which was signed off by the Scottish Government; and
- (iii) to otherwise approve the minute.

### ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL QUARTERLY PROGRAMME UPDATE

6. The Joint Committee had before it a report which provided an update on the Programme Summary in relation to Milestones, Benefits, Finance & Risk.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee –

- (a) notes the content of the Progress Report and Appendix 1; and
- (b) agrees an additional Joint Committee will be scheduled in July/August to approve the Change Request for the updated SeedPod Business Case.

Lindsay McKenzie (ONE), provided an update on the Seedpod project, making reference to the additional costs for the project, sourcing funding opportunities and the requirement to refresh the SeedPod Business Case. In this regard, she advised that there would likely be a need to arrange a special meeting of the Joint Committee in July/August 2022, to approve the change request for the updated Business Case.

The Joint Committee also heard from Mary Beattie, Head of Finance on the funding aspects relating to the report, in particularly, the 11% underspend which would be transferred to future years.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations contained within the report.

### STRATEGIC TRANSPORT APPRAISAL

7. The Joint Committee had before it a report which sought approval of proposals for a programme of development work for the Strategic Transport Appraisal, following confirmation of regional and national transport priorities.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee support the following activities in Financial Year 2022/23 and Financial Year 2023/24 in relation to the Strategic Transport Appraisal budget:-

- (a) Update the Case for Change and Preliminary Options Appraisal for A90N / A952 Ellon to Peterhead and Fraserburgh;
- (b) Progress to Outline Business Case key elements of A956 Wellington Road Corridor Study, including junctions at Harness Road and Souterhead Roundabout;

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- (c) Undertake an options study on assessing, and accommodating future potential growth in local Rail Freight, focussed on the Craiginches Rail Freight facilities adjacent to East Tullos;
- (d) Application of the regional Transport and Land Use Model (ASAM19) to inform strategic land use decisions for future Development Plans;
- (e) Progress to Outline Business Case the development of two innovative “Live Lab” demonstration projects following the scoping exercise undertaken in the previous year; and
  - (1) Regional Hydrogen Re-fuelling Facilities (demountable), aimed at extending the range of hydrogen vehicle use beyond Aberdeen City, facilitating broader geographic range of applications; and
  - (2) Mobility Hubs, in both urban and rural settings, enabling vehicle e-charging and uptake of alternative mobility solutions, supported by digital applications.

The Joint Committee heard from Paul Finch, NESTRANS who provided an update on the progress to date of the six schemes.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendations contained within the report.

**ADDENDUM**

Following the meeting, Mr Finch had sought and received approval from the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of minor but important changes to the start of the recommendation above. The following changes are underlined:-

“that the Joint Committee note and approve the following activities in Financial Year 2022/23 and Financial Year 2023/24 in relation to the Strategic Transport Appraisal budget, to be co-ordinated by the Director of NESTRANS, through the CRD Transport Working Group.”

### **ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022**

8. The Joint Committee had before it a report which presented the Aberdeen City Region Deal Annual Report 2021-22 and sought approval for its wider publication.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee endorses the report.

Richard Sweetnam, Chief Officer – City Growth provided an overview of the report advising that the format of the Annual Report followed the Scottish Government’s preferred template.

**The Joint Committee:-**

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to approve the recommendation, subject to amending the Deal envelope figure on page 6 of the Annual Report to read '£1billion' prior to submitting the final version to the UK and Scottish Governments.

**MOU HOUSING PROGRESS UPDATE**

9. The Joint Committee had before it a report which provided an update on the progress in relation to the housing workstream of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was a Scottish Government commitment to invest a further £254M over the same 10-year period as the City Region Deal.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee note progress in relation to the Memorandum of Understanding for Housing.

The Joint Committee heard Alex MacLeod, Housing Strategy and Building Standards Manager outline the key information from the report, making reference to (1) the details of the MOU agreement; (2) the historical difficulties in accessing the £20M Housing Infrastructure Fund; and (3) the progress being made in relation to the delivery of affordable housing in terms of the Affordable Housing Supply Grant.

Councillor Stirling sought assurance from officers that discussions were being held with Scottish Water in relation to the constrained sites along the A90 corridor.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to approve the recommendation contained with the report; and
- (ii) to instruct the Housing Strategy and Building Standards Manager, Aberdeenshire Council to work with Scottish Water to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing in constrained sites along the A90 corridor.

**MOU TRANSPORT PROGRESS UPDATE**

10. The Joint Committee had before it a report which provided an update on the progress of the projects being taken forward through the additional Scottish Government investment announced alongside the Aberdeen City Region Deal, namely (1) progress on the A90/A937 Laurencekirk Junction Improvement Scheme; and (2) the investment in the rail network to improve services between Aberdeen and the Central Belt. The Transport Scotland's update report was appended to the cover report.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee note the update within the report.

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In response to questions from members of the Joint Committee in relation to proposed rail network improvements and benefits to the North East, Damian Briody, Darius Astell and James Dunshea advised:-

- that £50M would be spent annually on the Aberdeen to Central Belt Corridor;
- that journey time reductions were likely to be as follows:-  
Aberdeen to Edinburgh (20 minutes);  
Aberdeen to Glasgow (10 minutes); and  
Aberdeen to Dundee (3 minutes).
- there would also be gauge enhancements to enable wider and longer freight trains and decarbonisation of the line, most likely via full electrification by 2030;
- there would be an increase in freight trains (target is 15 per day) which would reduce carbon emissions in line with the Scottish Government's Decarbonisation Action Plan; and
- new rolling stock of trains have greater technology/infrastructure and would improve Wi-Fi and passenger productivity.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to request that Transport Scotland submit a breakdown of actual spend in relation to the Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail Investment every two cycles; and
  - (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendation contained within the report.
- **COUNCILLOR ALEX NICOLL, Chairperson.**