

# ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

ABERDEEN, 7 October 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), Mark Findlater and Gwyneth Petrie (Aberdeenshire Council); and Ms Jennifer Craw and Sir Ian Wood (Opportunity North East).

In Attendance: Richard Sweetnam, John Wilson, Julie Richards-Wood, Graham Chandler, Alan McKay, Aigul Gray, Councillor Sandra Macdonald, Councillor Kairen van Sweeden and Mark Masson (Aberdeen City Council); Councillor John Cox, Alan Wood, Mary Beattie and Paul Macari (Aberdeenshire Council); Rab Dickson (NESTRANS).

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 AND APOLOGIES

1. The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Joint Committee.

The Clerk advised that apologies for absence had been submitted by Professor George Boyne, Stanley Morrice and Professor Steve Olivier.

## DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2. The Chairperson proposed that the Joint Committee consider item 4.1 (Seedpod Change Request), 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 (paragraphs 6).

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3. Sir Ian Wood intimated that he and Jennifer Craw had a connection to item 3.3 (SeedPod Change Request) and 4.1 (SeedPod Change Request – Exempt Appendix)

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and any issue affecting Opportunity North East (ONE), in particular matters relating to the Food Hub and BioAberdeen and the new Energy Transition Zone (ETZ), which may arise during this meeting, by virtue of them being Board Members of ONE, BioAberdeen Ltd, Food Hub (NES) Ltd and ETZ. However, having applied the objective test they did not consider that they had an interest to declare and would not be withdrawing from the meeting. This was because in practice, funding was allocated by agreement with government and in line with the tripartite agreement.

The Chairperson and Councillor Radley advised that they had a connection to item 3.2 (External Transportation Links to Aberdeen South Harbour – Progress Update) by virtue of them being Ward members for the area to which it related to, however, having applied the objective test they did not consider that they had an interest to declare and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.

**MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 10 JUNE 2022, FOR APPROVAL**

4. The Joint Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 10 June 2022, for approval.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the minute.

**ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE**

5. With reference to article 6 of the minute of the previous meeting of 10 June 2022, the Joint Committee had before it a report which provided an update in relation to programme milestones, benefits, finance and risk.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee notes the content of the Progress Report and Appendix 1.

Jennifer Craw, provided an update on the Bio-Therapeutics Hub project, including the progress of external and internal building works and the programme for engagement with stakeholders. It was noted that a site visit would be arranged prior to the opening date in Spring 2023.

Paul Macari provided information in relation to the Digital Infrastructure Business Case Gap Analysis, noting that the full Business Case would be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Committee in November 2022 outlining recommendations on how Aberdeen City Region Deal funding could be used.

Rab Dickson, Nestrans Director provided an update in relation to the £200m Rail Project, noting that Transport Scotland had clarified the position in terms of a recent press

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comment which made reference to a possible delay in in the project, however he intimated that that there would not be an impact on the 2026 implementation/delivery timescales.

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

- (i) to note that any significant details provided at the forthcoming Regional Transport Partnership Board meeting would be included within the report on the Rail Project to be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Committee; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendation contained within the report.

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

6. With reference to article 5 of the minute of the previous meeting of 10 June 2022, the Joint Committee had before it a report which provided an update on the External Transportation Links to Aberdeen South Harbour project, detailing the current progress and programme scenarios.

### **The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee –

- (a) instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, Aberdeen City Council, to progress the South Harbour Link Road in line with the “best-case” programme which delivers road opening within Quarter 2, 2026 by starting all processes at the earliest available opportunity;
- (b) note the risk for the wider project programme to extend beyond the timescales of the Aberdeen City Region Deal and instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, Aberdeen City Council, to maintain dialogue on this matter with Transport Scotland/Scottish Government and UK Government as a standing item on the Transportation Working Group; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, Aberdeen City Council, to review project milestones and spend profile on this basis and submit a Change Request as necessary.

The Joint Committee heard from Alan McKay, Team Leader, Roads Projects, Aberdeen City Council and John Wilson, Chief Officer – Capital, Aberdeen City Council who provided a summary of the report and responded to questions from members regarding the risks of delay, land assembly and the next phases of the project.

In terms of the final route alignment timescale, it was noted that completion of Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Stages 2 and 3 and the Outline Business Case for Aberdeen South Harbour Link Road would be around September/October 2023, based on a best-case scenario.

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

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- (i) to approve the recommendations contained within the report; and
- (ii) to note that the Chief Officer – Capital, Aberdeen City Council would circulate a briefing note to members outlining the process of local authority new road design and project development, including details around the mitigation of risks.

**SEEDPOD CHANGE REQUEST**

7. With reference to article 6 of the minute of the previous meeting of 10 June 2022, the Committee had before it a report which outlined changes between the original SeedPod business case, approved in 2019, and the revised Business Case which incorporated the additional costs identified to deliver the SeedPod construction project under current market conditions. It also provided details of additional opportunities and benefits responding to the acceleration of a transition to Net Zero.

**The report recommended:-**

that the Joint Committee approve the change request (Appendix A - Exempt) subject to the additional funding being realised.

The Joint Committee heard Jennifer Crow provide an overview of the report and explained the reasons why the change request was required.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation contained within the report.

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

**SEEDPOD CHANGE REQUEST - EXEMPT APPENDIX**

8. The Joint Committee had before it an exempt appendix relating to the Seedpod Change Request report, (Article 7 of this minute refers).

The Committee heard from Jennifer Crow in relation to financial aspects and construction costs for the project.

**The Joint Committee resolved:-**

to approve the revised timeline and change request.

- **COUNCILLOR ALEX NICOLL, Chairperson.**