

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL:

Powering Tomorrow's World

ABERDEEN, 18 November 2022. Minute of Meeting of the ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Alex Nicoll, Chairperson; Councillor Anne Stirling, Vice-Chairperson; Councillors Mark Findlater, Alex McLellan (as substitute for Councillor Ian Yuill), Gwyneth Petrie and Miranda Radley; and Professor George Boyne, Ms Jennifer Craw and Sir Ian Wood .

In Attendance: Julie Richards-Wood, Alan McKay, Aigul Gray, Councillor Sandra Macdonald and Mark Masson (Aberdeen City Council); Councillor John Cox, Alan Wood, Mary Beattie and Paul Macari (Aberdeenshire Council); Rab Dickson and Paul Finch (NESTRANS); Graeme Stewart (Network Rail) and Nicola McIntosh (Net Zero Technology Centre).

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 of the Joint Committee.

The Clerk advised that apologies for absence had been submitted by Councillor Yuill and that Councillor McLellan would be substituting for him.

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2. The Chairperson proposed that the Joint Committee consider item 10 (Digital Gap Analysis Business Case – Exempt Appendix) and item 11 (Net Zero Technology Centre Goals and the Launch of Technology Services Group – Exempt Appendix) 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 items so as to avoid disclosure of information of the classes described in the following paragraph of Schedule 7(A) to the Act:- articles 9 and 10 (paragraphs 6).

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3. Sir Ian Wood intimated that he, Jennifer Crow and Professor George Boyne had a connection to item 6 (Aberdeen City Region Deal Quarterly Programme Update) and any other 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 intimated that he too had a connection to item 6 (Aberdeen City Region Deal Quarterly Programme Update) and any other issue affecting Opportunity North East (ONE), by virtue of him being the Council's representative as a ONE Board Member. However, having applied the objective test he did not consider that he had an interest to declare and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 7 OCTOBER 2022, FOR APPROVAL

4. The Joint Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 7 October 2022, for approval.

The Joint Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute.

ABERDEEN CITY REGION DEAL QUARTERLY PROGRAMME UPDATE

5. With reference to article 5 of the minute of the previous meeting of 7 October 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 –

- (a) note the content of the Programme Update and Appendix 1;
- (b) approve the Committee Dates for 2023/2024 as 12th May; 8th September; 17th November and 9th February 2024.

Jennifer Crow acknowledged and welcomed the Just Transition funding received from the Scottish Government, which contributed to the funding of two City Region Deal projects and that they would seek to secure additional public funding as the projects develop over time.

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The Joint Committee heard from Alan McKay, Team Leader, Roads Projects, Aberdeen City Council provide an update in relation to the external transportation links to Aberdeen South Harbour project, advising that there was no change in terms of the project's key milestones.

The Joint Committee resolved:-

- (i) to approve the recommendations contained within the report; and
- (ii) to note that any issues or changes to key milestones in relation to the external transportation links to Aberdeen South Harbour project would be reported to the Joint Committee.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT UPDATE – TRANSPORT PROJECTS

6. The Joint Committee had before it a report which provided an update on the progress of projects being taken forward through the additional Scottish Government investment announced alongside the Aberdeen City Region Deal, including the A90/A937 Laurencekirk Junction Improvement Scheme and the investment in the rail network to improve services between Aberdeen and the Central Belt. The report had attached by way of an appendix, Transport Scotland's update report.

The report recommended:-

that the Joint Committee note the update.

Paul Finch, Strategy Manager, Nestrans highlighted the key information from the report, making reference to a meeting of the Aberdeen to Central Belt Liaison Group, held on 25 October 2022, which took the format of a joint presentation to the Boards of Nestrans and Tactran.

Graeme Stewart, Project Officer, Network Rail and Paul Finch provided an update on the £200m Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail improvement projects advising that the programme objectives/timescales remain unchanged with completion by the end of 2026.

The Joint Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that Paul Finch would circulate headline/milestone dates of the key activities for the Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail improvement projects to the members; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendation contained within the report.

DIGITAL GAP ANALYSIS BUSINESS CASE

7. The Joint Committee had before it a report which sought approval for the Digital Infrastructure Business Case within the Digital theme of the Aberdeen City Region Deal.

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The report recommended:-

that the Joint Committee –

- (a) instruct the Head of Service, Planning and Economy of Aberdeenshire Council to explore options on how to proceed with Recommendation 1 in the business case for Digital Infrastructure at Appendix A, set out in the Programme Overview, and to report back to the Joint Committee at its next meeting, and note that approval will be required by the Scottish Government, UK Government and Aberdeenshire Council;
- (b) approve Recommendations 2, 3 and 4 in the business case (programme overview page 5, detailed options pages 44-48) for Digital Infrastructure at Appendix A subject to approval of the business case by the Scottish Government and UK Government and Aberdeenshire Council; and
- (c) note the Integrated Impact Assessment at Appendix B completed as part of Digital Infrastructure Business Case.

The Joint Committee heard from Paul Macari, Head of Planning and Environment, Aberdeenshire Council who provided a summary of the report, making reference to the four recommendations of the digital business case including details of (1) maximising fibre opportunities at pace in the areas in the region identified with very low/no coverage; (2) investment to the port of Aberdeen to procure a private 5G infrastructure in the new Aberdeen South Harbour; (3) investment to ScotEID/SAOS to facilitate the delivery of Industry leading Agri-tech applications and services and Environmental monitoring in rural Aberdeenshire using Huntly as an initial area; and (4) the test-bed for 5G which had been established in Aberdeen to help businesses explore the potential applications of next generation mobile connectivity.

In response to a question from the Chairperson, Mr Macari advised that discussions would be held with the two Governments regarding loan agreements, following which, a report would be submitted to the Joint Committee in February 2023 if required.

The Joint Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations contained within the report.

NET ZERO TECHNOLOGY CENTRE GOALS AND THE LAUNCH OF TECHNOLOGY SERVICES GROUP

8. The Joint Committee had before it a report which provided an update on the launch of Net Zero Technology Services and the 2026 goals presented at 54 Month Net Zero Technology Centre (NZTC) checkpoint review.

The report recommended:-

that the Joint Committee note the content of the report and its Appendix 1, and the progress made.

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The Joint Committee heard from Nicola McIntosh, Finance and Commercial Director, NZTC who highlighted the key information from the report.

Councillor Findlater made reference to his recent enjoyable visit to the Net Zero Technology Centre and the successful work that they were undertaking and encouraged other members to attend.

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.

DIGITAL GAP ANALYSIS BUSINESS CASE - EXEMPT APPENDIX

9. The Joint Committee had before it an exempt appendix relating to the Digital Gap Analysis Business Case report, article 7 of this minute refers.

The Joint Committee resolved:-

to note the details within the appendix.

NET ZERO TECHNOLOGY CENTRE GOALS AND THE LAUNCH OF TECHNOLOGY SERVICES GROUP - EXEMPT APPENDIX

10. The Joint Committee had before it an exempt appendix relating to the Net Zero Technology Centre Goals and the Launch of Technology Services report, article 8 of this minute refers.

The Joint Committee resolved:-

to note the details within the appendix.

- **COUNCILLOR ALEX NICOLL, Chairperson.**