

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	29th June 2011
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Energy Cities Network
REPORT NUMBER:	EP&I /11/180

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks approval for Aberdeen City Council to join the Energy Cities Network.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Council:

1. Approves the Council joining the Energy Cities network
2. Notes that this may involve future travel for the Lord Provost and an officer to represent the City and attend relevant meetings, conferences, events, draft and candidate projects, etc. and that such travel arrangement will be approved in the normal manner, once the detail of any such travel requirements become apparent.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The annual subscription is based on the population size of member cities, in accordance with the following table.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION (in euros)

Population	Fees Special Fees*	
Less than 100,000	1250	625
Between 100,000 and 300,000	2500	1250
Between 300,000 and 500,000	3750	1875
More than 500,000	5000	2500
Associations of local authorities	2500	1250

**New Member States (until 2011), other East-European countries, non EU cities.*

The annual subscription of Euros 2,500 (£ 2,197.00 approximately) will be met from the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure budget (Projects, Partnerships and Funding)

The costs for the Lord Provost to attend relevant meetings will be met from the Lord Provost's travel budget.

The costs for an Officer accompanying the Lord Provost or attending relevant membership meetings will be met by the E P & I budget (Projects, Partnerships and Funding)

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- **Travel**
The Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure or a nominated Officer by the Director will represent Aberdeen City initiatives and projects. As far as possible, measures relevant to the destination will be taken to reduce any risks in line with Council Policy.
- **Risk Management**
It is important that Aberdeen is fully represented in all European matters; especially those dealing with energy issues, and that all opportunities for influencing policy and the development of transnational projects for the City's benefit are grasped in order that opportunities are maximised. This level of participation will help to increase the understanding of the new programmes and will assist in developing the capacity to successfully develop new projects and work with other European cities that will benefit Aberdeen City.
- **Human Rights/Equalities/Diversity**
European Policy takes full account of the Equal Opportunities Policy of the Council.
- **Sustainability**
Aberdeen City Council has a clear contribution to make to sustainable development with an emphasis on enhances productivity through improved resource efficiency, new business opportunities in the developing market for sustainable technologies and delivering better and more efficient Council services. By attending these events, it will give us the opportunity to look at the possibilities of best practice and drawing down more funds from EU programmes to raise the quality of life through increasing economic opportunity for all on a socially and environmentally sustainable basis. Also, this membership will help Aberdeen to be internationally recognized as an energy efficiency hub and pool for generating innovative solutions.

- **Environmental**
European activities are implemented in line with the aim of achieving a quality and sustainable environment.
- **Social**
The principles of Social inclusion underpin European cohesion policy.
- **Economic**
European representation and inter-regional networking contributes to the City's overall effort to maximize opportunities and to promote its interests, both at home and overseas with the aim of creating sustainable economy and energy efficient environment.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

A. Energy Cities

Energy Cities is the **European Association of local authorities** inventing their energy future. The association created in 1990 represents now more than 1,000 towns and cities in 30 countries. Close to 200 local authorities among them are individually Members of Energy Cities. There are 284 actions and 272 projects within the Energy Cities members. From April 2009 to April 2011, Energy Cities is under the Presidency of the City of Heidelberg (DE) with a Board of Directors of 11 European **cities**: Bielsko-Biala (PL), Braşov (RO), Cork County (IE), Delft (NL), Heidelberg (DE), Helsinki (FI), Leicester (UK), Pamplona (ES), Paris (FR), Salerno (IT), Växjö (SE). Energy Cities' premises are located in Brussels (BE) and Besançon (FR). The full list of members can be found at http://www.energy-cities.eu/cities/members_in_europe_en.php

Energy Cities has succeeded in building expertise, both at political and operational level, in its sphere of activity and is now recognized as an indispensable partner by an increasing number of organisations. Its co-operation with the EU institutions since the early beginning has enabled Energy Cities to acquire a sound knowledge of Community mechanisms.

The network is driven by a team of 18 people representing 7 nationalities with multidisciplinary skills in energy, environment, geography, local administration, economics, sociology, logistics, communication, documentation and information.

Main objectives are:-

- To strengthen members' role and skills in the field of sustainable energy,
- To represent members' interests and influence the policies and proposals made by European Union institutions in the fields of energy, environmental protection and urban policy and

- To develop and promote members' initiatives through exchange of experiences, the transfer of know-how and the implementation of joint projects.

Why should Aberdeen City Council join Energy Cities?

- Discover new practices and enlarge our partnership with other local authorities
- Input opinion on European Community proposals and future policy directions
- Be involved in projects supported by the European Commission (almost 400 municipalities have been involved in various projects aimed at improving their energy efficiency)
- Disseminate information regarding the City on an international scale
- Benefit from exclusive services: individual assistance in the preparation of projects, general and current awareness and information researches upon request, organization of study tours, conferences, etc.
- Obtain a greater chance of securing EU programme support in relation to the funding of energy related projects and programmes, due to the fact that membership of Energy Cities is one of the factors taken into account when determining successful funding applications.

As 75% of all energy consumption in Europe occurs in urban areas, local authorities more than ever have a pivotal role to play. Taking action at local level will help cities to reduce the energy consumption and energy bill whilst reducing local emissions and effluents, stimulate local growth by making use of locally available resources, and be recognized as an innovative town or city.

Benefit from European innovative initiatives and projects!

Energy Cities coordinates a number of ongoing initiatives and projects involving local authorities from EU Member States as well as Candidate countries, such as:

DISPLAY: This is the campaign currently supports around 400 local authorities in their efforts to make public buildings more energy efficient. Since 2003, Display® encourages its participants to display the energy performance of their buildings and to initiate awareness-raising amongst the building users.
www.display-campaign.org

IMAGINE: In 2006, Energy Cities launched the "*IMAGINE the Energy Future of our Cities*" initiative to help local authorities prepare for their future. This initiative gives local authorities a framework to initiate a participative multi-stakeholder dialogue process around the territorial energy future issues. Also, an exhibition, a series of thematic workshops and an annual seminar allow

exchange and discussion to take place around the concept of low energy cities with high quality of life for all.

www.energy-cities.eu/imagine

MODEL: This initiative aims at helping local authorities to become models for both the citizens and the other European municipalities. Its main objective is to improve the practical capacities of local authorities and/or local energy management agencies from 10 New Member States plus Croatia to better deal with intelligent energy issues at both individual (municipalities) and collective (national networks or embryos of networks) levels.

www.energymodel.eu

Free services (exclusive to members):

Members receive the following services for free as part of their membership:

- The bi-annual **magazine** Energy Cities Info
- **Information** on European policies, programmes, calls for proposals on a regular basis via the twice monthly NEWS and through personalized contacts
- Support and **personal advice** from the association's staff for the realization of projects
- **Promotion of your local actions thanks to Energy Cities' numerous communication supports:** Energy Cities' website, blogs, best practice database, magazine, newsletters and social networking websites, etc.
- **Participate for free** at the Annual Rendezvous, in the Display® Campaign, in European projects and in other partnership-building opportunities

Discounted services for members

The following services are available to members at discounted rates:

- Participate with Energy Cities' tailor-made **study tours:** use others' practices as a source of inspiration for implementing projects, whether at European level or in your own city (<http://www.energy-cities.eu/-Study-Tours->)
- Get the **IMAGINE exhibition** in the language of your choice (www.imagineyourenergyfuture.eu/exhibition)
- Have a **permanent representation in our Brussels' office** as well as the use of a meeting room
- Benefit from our expertise and assistance in **organising international conferences** in your city

Energy Cities members commit to?

As a member of Energy Cities you engage:

- To make energy efficiency, renewables and sustainable planning an integral part of **your local policies**
- **To carry out initiatives** and actions on your territory so as to (contribute to) reach the EU 2020 objectives
- **To give your opinion** on European decisions (in consultation processes, etc.)
- **To share your experiences**, ideas and information with the network
- **To provide support** to other members upon request
- **To inform our personal contact** at Energy Cities about our initiatives & projects by sending one or more local action(s) using the template we will provide you; these will be promoted via our communication channels such as EC website, EC INFO, etc.
- **To establish a link** between Aberdeen City website and the Energy Cities website www.energy-cities.eu
- **To promote our Energy Cities membership** when talking about your sustainable energy activities
- **To participate in Energy Cities' Annual Rendezvous** and the General Assembly

Justification

Energy Cities is leading, in cooperation with **Climate Alliance, CEMR, Fedarene** and **Eurocities, the Covenant of Mayors Office** and is an official Supporting Structure. **Moreover, 90 Energy Cities members are involved as signatories in the Covenant of Mayors** which will provide a multiplying effect of the membership Aberdeen City has in other networks (the Covenant of Mayors) by strengthening partnerships, increasing the influence and importance of Aberdeen City and by joining and applying the most advanced projects and policies especially in the new initiatives coming out of the European Union such as the SMART CITIES / REGIONS Initiative.

As leader of the Covenant of Mayors Office, Energy Cities is committed to facilitate networking activities within the Covenant, support the promotion of the Covenant of Mayors, monitor the implementation of the Covenant by signatories, provide technical support, support liaison with other actors in the Covenant, and support liaison with other relevant EU initiatives and policies.

As a supporting structure, Energy Cities is committed to encourage the highest possible number of its members to join the initiative, enhance the exchange of experiences and know-how on tools and methodologies helping cities to put in place their SEAP's (**Sustainable Energy Action Plan**), promote its members' activities and SEAP's as to inspire and show the way to other European cities, set up a "Covenant Task Force" within its Board of Directors aiming to better respond on the cities' expectations and formulate the proposals for improvements, and promote the Covenant of Mayors in Europe and beyond.

In relation to this, "Aberdeen City Council has a strong track record of tackling carbon emissions. The council was one of the first to sign up in 2004 to the Carbon Trust Local Authority Carbon Management Programme (LACMP), which aims to reduce emissions from our buildings, vehicles, street lighting and landfill sites. We committed ourselves at that time to a carbon reduction target of 10% by 2010, and a further 15% by 2015. We surpassed that four years ago in 2006, when we achieved a 31% CO₂ reduction. We now want to build on our impressive achievements so far and strive even harder to do all we can to combat climate change. Last year the council signed up to the LACMP programme again, setting an ambitious target of further cuts of 23% by 2015 and 42% by 2020", as stated in the **Carbon Management Plan (2010-2015)**.

On the Energy Cities website one can find a list of projects, conferences, study tours, cities actions, events and the newsletter. Energy Cities benefits from its experienced team's project management skills and participates in numerous European campaigns and projects in the framework of programmes such as **INTERREG, CONCERTO or Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE)**. Aberdeen City will certainly take advantage of this membership in order to establish new partnerships and receive practical information when applying projects to these programmes. Also, Aberdeen City can really promote itself as the Capital of Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy or Urban Mobility projects and events.

Although Aberdeen belongs to the **World Energy Cities Partnership (WECP)** which represents collaboration of 18 "energy cities" around the world, Energy Cities offer more than 200 local authorities as individual members which will give way for the new partnerships and projects.

Having in mind that it is very difficult to reduce energy consumption and to increase energy efficiency by standing alone by working with other local authorities and stakeholders and by exchanging best practices, debating our successes and failures, pooling our resources and our ideas Aberdeen City would multiply the effect of the local projects, activities, events and policies. Energy Cities regularly publishes opinions on the various Community legislative documents in relation with its fields of action. Whereas a municipality alone has little influence, Energy Cities is able to combine the forces of all to take more appropriate action. Since Energy Cities knows the work, targets and initiatives of each member city and the targets of different European Union programmes, and directives, it is easy for them to organise or help to organize fruitful joint projects which will benefit as many member cities as possible. We are aware of the fact that the City is investing itself, but external funds should also be used as much as possible by establishing stronger and broader partnerships with the pioneers in this field. This will provide Aberdeen City with new know-how and expertise in this field and also raise Aberdeen's international profile. Energy Cities can be a very good channel for dissemination of our own experience which means that our work will not have effects only locally. When speaking about Energy Cities one cannot forget extremely well organized Annual Conferences and meetings. These occasions offer all members a possibility to hear about highly topical

issues, good experience of other cities and have interesting discussions with others working with the same issues and deepen relationship with other cities.

B. Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign

Energy Cities is an Official Associate of the **Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign** which showcases activities dedicated to energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions. The focus is on spreading best practice in sustainable energy technology, build alliances and inspire new energy ideas and actions. Any activity, be it a project or event carried out to encourage the use of renewables or energy efficiency is welcome. There are no limits except to support the overall goal: to spread inspiring stories and be coordinated from Europe. More than 250 new projects join each year and the Campaign promotes around 450 events. Also, more than 1, 200 organizations across Europe are involved in the activities of Campaign and their membership has no financial implications.

Fore example, one of the projects Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign promotes is the **Energy Day**, organized in order to promote renewable energy or energy efficiency. Moreover, by signing up to the Covenant of Mayors, local authorities commit to reduce their CO2 emissions by at least 20% across their territories. Covenant signatories pledge to organize local Energy Days once a year to promote the support of citizens and local stakeholders needed to meet this challenge. Therefore, Aberdeen City, already being one of the **Covenants of Mayors signatories**, can get additional visibility to energy efficiency projects by organizing such an event.

Aberdeen City Council can join Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign by submitting projects which **must make a significant and demonstrable contribution to the EU 2020 objectives with regards to energy efficiency and renewable energy sources**. This implies the need to present concrete facts and figures which demonstrate the energy savings and/or the increased use of renewable energy sources which are a direct result of the project. Also projects should be an outstanding example in its area. Once accepted, the project summary will be edited and published on the Campaign website but there are more communication tools in place to promote truly inspiring stories – for example the monthly media news alert, the Awards Competition and featured articles.

Thus, by joining the Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign Aberdeen City will improve the visibility of all energy projects implemented in the City, receive information about the best practices and most daring breakthroughs worldwide and enlarge the number of partnerships.

6. IMPACT

European policy, representation and best practice supports the Council's objective of representing the interests of the people and organizations of

Aberdeen within North East Scotland, the UK, and Europe. The Europe 2020 Strategy aims for a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Europe which is re-elected in the Council's 2011-2016 5 Year Business Plan.

Energy Cities takes note of the Public consultation on **Smart Cities and Communities** which is of particular interest of Aberdeen City. Energy Cities welcomes Smart Cities and Communities, and will actively contribute to its success, for instance by promoting the upcoming Call for Proposals and accompanying its members in their project preparation and implementation.

Several of the challenges of the Community Plan identified in the Single Outcome Agreement are also supported, such as: Leading the City, Being Informed, Getting Involved, Land Use and the Environment and Clean City, Transport and Connections, Prosperity and Jobs, and Aberdeen's Image.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Energy Cities Membership pack 2010

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Bojana Vujanac
Serbian intern
VBojana@Aberdeencity.gov.uk

Yasa Ratnayeke
Manager EU Policy & External Funding
yratnayeke@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel: 523807