

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	17 <sup>th</sup> May 2017
REPORT TITLE	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
REPORT NUMBER	OCE/17/008
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Executive
REPORT AUTHOR	Head of Service, Office of Chief Executive

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

- 1.1 The report seeks a decision from members as to whether or not the Council should re-join the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA).

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Council resolves:
- i. To agree whether or not to re-join COSLA, and should the decision be to re-join;
  - ii. To agree the five members to take the Council's places on Convention;
  - iii. To agree whether or not the Council's Convention members should nominate any member(s) of the City Council for the positions of President or Vice President of COSLA; and
  - iv. To agree a Council nominee for each of the four COSLA Boards.

**3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 At its Budget Meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014 the Council resolved to terminate its membership of COSLA with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, reserving the right to withdraw its notice to leave at any point during 2014/15 in view of the, at that time, impending review of the COSLA Constitution and Standing Orders.
- 3.2 The notice was not withdrawn and at its meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015, the Council considered a report by the Chief Executive (OCE/15/005) on the arrangements being put in place at that time in light of the Council no longer being a member of COSLA from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.
- 3.3 The Chief Executive of COSLA has now written to the Council's Chief Executive outlining a number of actions which need to be taken, should the Council wish to re-join COSLA in order that the new COSLA term begins

smoothly and that any Aberdeen City Council representatives at COSLA play their appropriate role in this.

- 3.4 Should the Council decide to re-join COSLA, COSLA seeks confirmation of the Council Leader by 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017 so that (s)he can be sent the papers for the COSLA Leaders Meeting due to take place on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May. The COSLA Leaders meeting takes place 8 times a year.
- 3.5 COSLA holds a meeting of its Convention on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June. The Convention consists of 133 councillors (if all 32 councils are members) and at its meeting in June it will elect COSLA's President and Vice President. The City Council has an allocation of 5 places on the Convention, and should the Council decide to re-join COSLA request confirmation of the five members of the Council's delegation by no later than 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017.
- 3.6 Under the terms of COSLA's constitution any Council delegation to the Convention must reflect the balance of that Council's party political representation. Legal and Democratic Services colleagues have confirmed that the City Council's five members would be made up of 2 SNP, 1 Scottish Conservative, 1 Aberdeen Labour and 1 to be drawn from the Scottish Liberal Democrats and the Independents. The COSLA Convention meets twice a year.
- 3.7 Only members of the COSLA Convention can make nominations for the roles of President and Vice President and nominations must be received by COSLA by 9<sup>th</sup> June 2017. Any elected member from a COSLA member Council is eligible to be nominated for the roles of President and Vice President.
- 3.8 In addition to the above COSLA has four Boards – Children and Young People; Health and Social Care; Environment and Economy; Community Wellbeing. Each member Council has one nominated elected member on each Board. Each Board meets 6 times a year.
- 3.9 At its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015 the Council noted that Glasgow City Council, Renfrewshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council had all also served notice to leave COSLA membership on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. The Council agreed to join these three Councils in the Scottish Local Government Partnership. Should the Council decide to re-join COSLA, Aberdeen City Council will leave this voluntary association of councils.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The COSLA membership levy payable by the City Council for 2017/18 would be £128,521. This sum can be met from the subscriptions budget held in the Office of Chief Executive.
- 4.2 At its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015, the Council was informed that COSLA's position was that any Council terminating membership would be liable for a one-off payment to COSLA. The size and scope of any such payment would be the subject of negotiation. No figure has to date crystallised in relation to this and no negotiation has to date been held on the matter.

- 4.3 Should the Council agree to re-join COSLA and should COSLA seek a payment in relation to the Council's two year absence from membership the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services would enter into negotiation with COSLA and a further report on this would be brought to a future meeting of the Council.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Beyond the issue set out in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 above, there are no further legal implications in relation to the subject of this report.

## **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

- 6.1 The Council's non-membership of COSLA has been the subject of public interest over the past two years and as a result, should the Council decide to re-join COSLA further interest is likely to be generated in the short-term. The Council's decision on this report will be communicated via the Council's website and through a media release.

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

- 7.1 Should the Council decide to re-join COSLA, membership of the organisation and involvement with its structures will be used wherever possible to support the delivery of the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan and the Council's Strategic Business Plan.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 None

## **9. APPENDICES**

- 9.1 None

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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