

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	City Growth & Resources
DATE	24 April 2018
REPORT TITLE	External Projects & Partnerships
REPORT NUMBER	PLA/18/007
DIRECTOR	Steven Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Richard Sweetnam
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TERMS OF REFERENCE	General Delegation 4

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for international travel associated with external partnerships and funding activity.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Committee:-
- (a) Approve elected member and officer international travel as detailed in the Travel Plan for financial year 2018-19; and
 - (b) Delegate authority to the Chief Officer - City Growth, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Customer Experience, to authorise travel within the allocated budget.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The External Funding and Partnerships team work across several Council services identifying and applying for external funding and support to priority projects of the Council. In supporting this, the Council is a member of a number of European networks that enhance policy knowledge and create opportunities for external funds that could support implementation of Council priority projects. A presence within these networks contributes to the international promotion of Aberdeen to international funders and key policy makers.
- 3.2 In the context of Brexit, the UK and Scottish Government have confirmed that funds will be available until at least 2020 to support external funding of transnational programmes. In some activities, it is anticipated that this funding

could continue beyond 2020 in relation to research, innovation and cohesion transnational programmes.

3.3 EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

3.3.1 Hydrogen & Electro-Mobility in European Regions (HyER)

HyER is a membership-based network which represents the interests of European regions and cities active in the field of hydrogen, fuel cell technologies and electro mobility. The organization is the point of reference for hydrogen and electric mobility in Europe: supporting members with the development of the technology; co-operating with key decision makers at national and international government levels; and providing a network for cities and regions to share knowledge and experience. Membership of the body allows working relationships to be built which develop the city's key low carbon policies. Aberdeen City currently holds Chair of the Board which is due for re-election in May 2019.

3.3.2 Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)

CPMR is a transnational membership organisation of over 160 regions from Europe. It has an extensive network of contacts within European and national institutions, operating as a think tank and lobby for the Regions. CPMR's primary focus is territorial cohesion and blue growth – namely the development of harbor, coastal and offshore economies - and climate change adaption are also highlighted as key priorities.

3.3.3 North Sea Commission (NSC)

CPMR is the umbrella body of six regional commissions and Aberdeen is aligned to a North Sea strand. The NSC aims to develop partnerships between the areas around the North Sea basin. This is achieved by providing a network for collaboration and lobbying at international level for the region's interests. The NSC successfully lobbied for an Interreg North Sea Region Programme which Aberdeen City Council has benefitted from, receiving significant funds to develop hydrogen transport and flood alleviation projects, such as those at Maidencraig and Stronsay Park. There are four thematic groups within the NSC and Aberdeen City Council holds Chair of the Smart Regions Group and Vice Chair of the Transport Group.

3.3.4 Energy Cities

Energy Cities is the European Association of local authorities in energy transition. It represents more than 1000 towns and cities in 30 countries. It aims to develop and promote sustainable energy initiatives and represent members' interests to national and international bodies. The network has provided several opportunities to utilise external funding, such as the development of the city's district heat network through the Interreg NWE programme.

3.4 Table 1: Summary of Groups & Council Representation

Partnership	Nature of role	Link to LOIP Policies
Hydrogen & Electro-	Elected Member	LOIP – Investment in Infrastructure

4.	Mobility in European Regions (HyER)	Chairs Board, Member	
	Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)	Member	LOIP – internationalisation
	North Sea Commission (NSC)	Elected Member Chairs Thematic Group “Smart Regions”, and Vice Chair of “Transport” group	LOIP – Investment in Infrastructure
	Energy Cities	Member	LOIP – Safe and Resilient Communities

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There is cost associated in participation in these partnerships. This is detailed in Appendix 1 and a summary presented below:

4.2

Details	
Table A – ACC Memberships	£27,500
Table B – ACC Projects	£12,600
Table C – Project Development & Transnational Working	£13,500
TOTAL	£53,600

4.3 Costs proposed in this report are contained within the City Growth budget in the 2018-19 budget setting process. The project costs above also take into account the recoverable costs from projects and programmes including Fuel Cell Hydrogen Joint Undertaking and HyTrEc 2.

4.4 Participation and attendance at external partnership meetings creates opportunities for external funding, such as access to the Interreg North Sea Region Programme, which supports delivery and implementation of key city objectives, such as data innovation.

4.5 Delegation of travel authorisation to the Chief Officer – City Growth, in consultation with Chief Officer – Customer Experience, quickens the travel

approval process. The ability to make travel arrangements earlier will reduce travel costs to Aberdeen City Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Local authorities are subject to statutory controls and as such are only entitled to defray travelling and other expenses incurred as a result of approved duties as defined in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	Travel approval process in its current form of approvals adds time to the booking process which increases travel costs	H	Delegate authority to approve travel, once approved by Committee, to Chief Officer – City Growth
Legal	Spend not in line with approved duties		Delegation to Chief Officer of Customer Experience to administer, implement and approve travel expenses
Employee	There are no known risks		
Customer	There are no known risks.		
Environment	Travel results in Co2 emissions	L	Public transport is used thereby reducing emission levels
Technology	There are no known risks		
Reputational	Potential risk with regards to personal liability if Elected Member holds a position	L	Appointments are subject to review by Governance in relation to Appointment to Outside Bodies Policy

7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	Delivers on LOIP primary drivers of: Investment in infrastructure; innovation; inclusive economic growth; and internationalisation.

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Partnerships and Alliances	Participation in external transnational partnerships results in increased external funding and investment to Aberdeen.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	Full EHRIA not required
Privacy Impact Assessment	Not required
<u>Children's Rights Impact Assessment/Duty of Due Regard</u>	Not applicable (see page 36 of link for further guidance)

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Not applicable

10. APPENDICES

External Partnership Travel Plan 2018-19

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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