



**Scotland's Seven Cities:  
A Shared Vision for Scotland's Success**

**May 2015**



# Scotland's Seven Cities: A Shared Vision for Scotland's Success

Scotland's Seven Cities are the economic, cultural, social and intellectual powerhouses of our nation and operate in a global environment.

By combining their strengths and celebrating their diversity, Scotland's Seven Cities can enhance their role in stimulating, sustaining and delivering Scotland's future economic growth. Working together, they share a long term 20 year vision of a successful Scotland as a place to work, live, innovate, study and visit.

International evidence is growing on the important role cities play in creating sustainable economic growth.

Globally, governments and investors see cities as key drivers of both regional and national economies, whilst also offering solutions to the social and environmental challenges of the 21st century.

To deliver, our cities require empowerment and strategic support from government to ensure they maximise their assets, infrastructure, skills and opportunities, for all of Scotland's people. They need the freedom to decide locally, to raise funds through taxes and invest to create jobs and economic growth and to deliver services which are tailored to cities and city regions. Seven key areas of responsibility for cities are:

1. Infrastructure to deliver economic growth through improved digital and transport connectivity
2. Development opportunities that will attract investors and secure investment, create jobs and stimulate economic growth in cities
3. Investment which is innovative and funding which is anchored locally
4. Creative centres driving productivity, knowledge and culture
5. Sustainability and smart cities initiatives
6. Tackling inequality, delivering social justice, building partnerships and playing a lead role in decentralising democracy
7. International promotion and gateways on the global stage.

Investment in and empowerment of cities will deliver the greatest wealth and opportunities for the nation. Scotland's Seven Cities recognise the values for which the nation is renowned and will utilise increased economic growth for mutual benefit across the entire country.

Importantly, they need to develop and extend economic partnership and collaboration with each other for mutual benefit, while recognising and celebrating their distinctiveness and diversity.

In addition, Scotland's Seven Cities seek partnerships with Scottish and UK governments, which will empower and support cities in their delivery of long-term and sustainable growth for Scotland and the UK.

Central to this relationship are the following responsibilities:

## **1. Our Cities need infrastructure to deliver economic growth through improved digital and transport connectivity**

Scotland's cities require investment in infrastructure to provide the environment in which investments and job creation can flourish, with improved connections between them and with external markets.

Scotland's cities need:

- Fast, reliable and affordable road, rail and air connections between each city and between the cities and their regions.
- The inclusion of Scotland in the UK's High Speed Rail Network.
- Continued, frequent air links from Scotland's cities to London and other international hub airports.
- Full roll-out of a superfast broadband network covering the whole country, including travel routes.
- Greater flexibility to invest in capital, transport and other infrastructural development initiatives that improve the competitiveness and connectivity of cities and their surrounding regions.

## **2 Our cities need development opportunities that will attract investors, secure investment, create jobs and stimulate economic growth**

Our cities need to have development opportunities that address market need, support business expansion and create a strong sense of place within cities.

Scotland's cities need:

- A greater understanding of the international investment and development market for property.
- A set of clear large scale housing and commercial development propositions to take to market both as independent cities and as collaborative opportunities for both housing and commercial business property.
- Public spaces that capitalise on each city's assets and promote people's health, happiness and well-being and attract talent and investment.

## **3 Our Cities need investment which is innovative and funding which is anchored locally**

Our cities need transparent and enabling frameworks which empower them to develop funding solutions to support continuing regeneration and to attract investment.

Scotland's Cities need:

- 21<sup>st</sup> century funding models which support longer-term investment and development.
- Increased use of new funding models, which capture locally generated taxes/receipts to reinvest in city region economies. The ability to have control over the proceeds from taxes to invest in city regions to create jobs.

## **4. Our Cities are creative centres of productivity, knowledge and culture**

Scotland's cities sit at the heart of our nation's knowledge economy. Their ability to nurture, attract and retain talent must be supported.

Our cities are home to many high-growth and internationally-competitive economic sectors and to world-leading academic institutions.

Culturally, Scotland's cities are the touchstone for the nation, possessing and displaying our rich heritage and international appeal.

To deliver on our ambitions for growth it is important to Scotland's economy that our higher education institutions remain world-class and competitive.

Scotland's cities need:

- To be nationally and internationally competitive hubs of industry, creativity and knowledge.
- To have greater control over welfare to work and provision of skills programmes tailored to city and city region requirements.
- To be the focus for creative models which promote effective collaboration between our enterprise agencies, universities and colleges and business.
- To encourage and support the creation of innovation networks and hubs which enhance skills development, encourage business start-ups and improve service delivery.

## **5. Our Cities are sustainable and smart**

It is important that Scotland's cities are inclusive, healthy, attractive, economically successful places to live and visit. They have a key role to play in realising Scotland's ambitions of being a world-leading sustainable economy. Our natural environment supports a large part of our economy and, combined with a leading role in the application of smart technology, Scotland must aim to become a world leader in sustainable, smart cities. This will be vital to capture the maximum economic benefit from the sustainable development of Scotland's natural resources, especially energy, and technological prowess.

To be world-class cities and deliver on Scotland's carbon reduction targets, Scotland's Cities must be supported in:

- Developing a low carbon and renewable energy portfolio and reducing energy demand.
- Developing approaches to sustainable waste management.
- Developing and applying smart technology to all appropriate infrastructure investment.

## **6. Our Cities tackle inequalities, deliver social justice, build partnerships with people, regions and government and play a lead role in decentralising democracy**

Our Cities are Scotland's economic hubs, have a key role in tackling inequalities and delivering social justice, connecting surrounding communities through partnerships and have a leading part to play in decentralising democracy. Cities can and do enable large numbers of people to realise their ambitions and engage positively in the economy and their communities.

To deliver, Scotland's cities need:

- Priority support from Scottish and UK Governments which reflects the contribution Scotland's Cities make to Scotland's and the UK's economy.
- Equitable financial allocation and return on investment based on productivity or efficiency gains which supports the city economies, jobs and skills.
- The fair redistribution of business rates income which links business rate income to infrastructure investment across the city regions.
- A greater stake in Scottish Government, DWP work programmes and skills development agencies and which provide greater co-ordination of skills development and employer engagement at a city level to address long term unemployment, youth unemployment and low wages.
- A complementary relationship to exist between cities and their rural counterparts and city regions. Both depend on one another for success.
- The increased development and growth of cities must be used to enhance the wellbeing of the nation as a whole to fully realise the future that Scotland aspires to.

## **7. Our Cities are promoted internationally and are gateways on a global stage**

Our Cities are distinct and diverse and their economic, academic, scenic and cultural strengths deliver as international gateways to Scotland. Our Cities perform a symbolic role for the nation, characterising Scotland's aspirations, values and confidence. It is recognised that there will continue to be competition between Scotland's cities but our Cities and their regions have global strengths which should be globally marketed by Cities, and which have a key role to play in realising Scotland's ambitions to grow and internationalise our business base.

To achieve this, Scotland's cities need:

- A greater recognition of the unique characteristics of each city and what they deliver for Scotland individually and collectively.
- Where appropriate, a Scotland-wide approach to major events to ensure all of Scotland shares in their success.
- The development of international trade and tourism strategies which align with Scotland's overall growth strategy and deliver against city and regional development agendas.

## THE SEVEN CITIES VISION

We the undersigned recognise the essential role Scotland's SEVEN Cities play in creating and delivering a successful economic future.

We will work individually and collectively in partnership with government, stakeholders, and citizens to drive forward our shared vision of a successful, inclusive and sustainable Scotland.

Date of signing : Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015 :

On behalf of Aberdeen Council : (signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor Jennifer Laing, Leader



On behalf of Dundee City Council : (signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor Ken Guild, Leader



On behalf of The City of Edinburgh Council : (signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor Andrew Burns, Leader



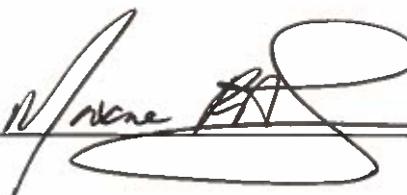
On behalf of Glasgow City Council : (signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor Archie Graham, Deputy Leader



On behalf of The Highland Council : (signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor Maxine Smith, Vice-Convenor



On behalf of Perth & Kinross Council : (signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor John Kellas



On behalf of Stirling Council : (signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Councillor Johanna Boyd, Leader

