



**Note of the Scottish Cities Alliance Leadership Group meeting
Wednesday 20th June 2018 10.30 am – 12.30 pm - Edinburgh**

Attendees :

Cllr Jennifer Laing	Co-Leader, Aberdeen City Council (via conference call)
Angela Taylor	Aberdeen City Council (via conference call)
Cllr John Alexander	Chair & Leader, Dundee City Council
David Martin	Chief Executive, Dundee City Council
Cllr Adam McVey	Leader, City of Edinburgh Council (Items 1-4)
Sharon Thomson	Glasgow City Council
Cllr Margaret Davidson	Leader, Highland Council (via conference call)
Cllr Scott Farmer	Leader, Stirling Council
Anne Ferguson	Senior Manager, Economic Development, Culture & Tourism, Stirling Council
Keith Brown MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
Oonagh Gil	Deputy Director Enterprise and Cities, Scottish Government
Aileen Edwards	Programme Director, Scottish Cities Alliance

Also in attendance :

Simon Forrest	Scottish Government
Morag Watt	Cities Team, Scottish Government
Nora Senior	Strategic Board, Enterprise & Skills Board (Items 1-33)
Paula McLeay	City of Edinburgh Council (Items 1-4)
Vicki Bibbi	CoSLA (Items 1-4)
Lauren Bruce	CoSLA (Items 1-4)
Chris Brodie	SDS
Gordon McGuinness	SDS
Iain McCreaddie	Policy & Stakeholder Manager, Scottish Cities Alliance
Isabel McDermid	Admin & Finance Officer, Scottish Cities Alliance

Apologies :

Angela Scott	Chief Executive, Aberdeen City Council
Andrew Kerr	Chief Executive, City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Susan Aitken	Leader, Glasgow City Council
Annemarie O'Donnell	Chief Executive, Glasgow City Council
Steve Barron	Chief Executive, Highland Council
Cllr Murray Lyle	Leader, Perth and Kinross Council
Bernadette Malone	Chief Executive, Perth and Kinross Council
Stewart Carruth	Chief Executive, Stirling Council

Note of meeting

1. Welcome, Introduction & Apologies

The Chair welcomed the group and thanked Scottish Government for hosting the meeting. Introductions were made, and apologies were tabled as noted above.

2. Note of Previous Meeting

An update was given on Item 6 - Plenary discussion and actions update :

- The Alliance Core Team, in consultation with the Scottish Government, has developed a short template on regional economic partnerships to collect information on current developments across the cities. This information will be collated with a view to having a strategic discussion with the Delivery Group in August to identify areas to be progressed collaboratively and maximise opportunities for economic growth through regional partnership structures.
- The Scottish Government will circulate updated data on innovation to the cities once it becomes available over the coming weeks.
- The Alliance attended the first meeting of SCDI's UKIS Working Group and in the first instance the Alliance's Hydrogen Project Manager will present an opportunity to the group for the group to consider how they might support it through one of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund calls.

The note of the previous meeting on 22nd March 2018 was approved and will now be published on the Alliance website.

3. Enterprise and Skills Review: Strategic Board

Following the discussion at the Leadership Group Meeting in December 2017, the cities welcomed the opportunity to actively engage with the Strategic Board to support and inform the delivery of flexible integrated regional models.

Nora Senior, welcomed the opportunity to speak with the Leadership Group and to update them on the work of the Strategic Board (the Board). She highlighted that the key objectives of the Board are to provide a seamless approach to the delivery of services to business, regardless of their point of entry to national agencies, to improve the resilience and competitiveness of Scotland's economy. This would be achieved through better alignment of the activity of national agencies, more fluidity in terms of sharing staff and services, and a stronger evidence base to drive policy making through the creation of an Analytical Unit. An early success for the Board has been the agreement for the national agencies to align their business planning activity to support better joint working.

The Board have now agreed four priority areas to focus on, each with different Board member leads :

- Business Creation and Growth
- Business Model and Workplace Innovation
- Exporting
- Digital and Enablement

Over the summer 2018, a Board member will lead a consultation on each of these agendas and the Board will be in contact with the cities to get their views. This will provide further evidence to Ministers to inform the Programme for Government 2019-20 and Scottish Government's budget 2019-20.

The cities welcomed the drive for greater alignment of national agency activity and the need for more targeted activity to address key issues around productivity. It was noted that the education sector would play a key role in supporting businesses to grow. The importance of place and how the evolving regional economic partnerships could

support new ways of collaboration between the city and national agencies was noted. The need for meaningful engagement by the national agencies with regional economic partnerships, as well as through existing structures such as Community Planning to achieve a step change in productivity and inclusive growth, was also acknowledged.

The Cabinet Secretary noted that the Scottish Government have encouraged the national agencies to engage more fully at the regional level through the Letters of Intent, and is open to local authorities coming forward with proposals for new ways of working that would drive improved economic outcomes locally and nationally. He also highlighted that Scotland still remains a highly attractive location for global investment.

4. Transient Visitor Levy (TVL)

Vicki Bibby updated the group on work undertaken by CoSLA on Transient Visitor Tax as part of its wider activity to seek greater discretionary tax powers for local government. It was noted that CoSLA are seeking a “tax” rather than a “levy” as this would provide local government with greater flexibility around how the money would be used locally. CoSLA are now undertaking a programme of engagement with national trade bodies, parliamentary parties and other key stakeholders to take forward this agenda, and are happy to support any city local authority to take forward work locally in this area.

Paula McLeay, City of Edinburgh Council, gave an overview of the work being undertaken by the city to progress their work on a Tourism Visitor Levy.

Edinburgh and Aberdeen, who are both taking forward proposals for a Tourism Visitor Levy, highlighted that they are engaging significantly with their local industry representatives and trade bodies, and in general these stakeholders are supportive of the levy.

The Cabinet Secretary highlighted that the Scottish Government were keen to understand the implications of any legislative changes this agenda would require and what consideration had been given to alternative options, including those available under existing powers, before a decision was made. He also noted that the Scottish Government would be open to a full range of stakeholders views both locally and nationally.

5. Skills and Talent Attraction

Chris Brodie and Gordon McGuinness gave a presentation covering the breadth of activity being undertaken by Skills Development Scotland and Talent Scotland in partnership with other key stakeholders, including business and the Third sector, to ensure the cities and Scotland have access to the skills and talent necessary to remain globally attractive and competitive post-Brexit, when competition for investment and talent will intensify.

The group welcomed the presentation and noted the joint working that is taking place regionally to maximise the economic opportunities offered by the skills and business base of local economies through the developing regional economic partnerships and existing Community Planning structures. It was highlighted that there was a need for the national agencies to more fully engage at a local level and that this would be supported through the ongoing work of the Strategic Board.

SDS highlighted that they had also undertaken work with parents to help support young people with their career choices. This is available on their website under “My World of Work”. SDS agreed to share links to this information with the Core Team to circulate to the cities.

6. Annual Report

The Programme Director presented the Alliance’s Annual Report and Operational Budget 2017-2018 which outlines the breadth of activity and progress that has been made by the Alliance partners this year. The group welcomed the report which gave them a comprehensive overview of the Alliance’s activity.

Scottish Government noted that they would wish to make some small changes and would send these to the Core team prior to publication on the Alliance website.

The Chair thanked all involved in preparing the report, which highlights the cities involved and the tangible benefits of partnerships working, including sharing resources and intelligence, and demonstrates the added value of the Alliance partnership.

7. AOB

The Cabinet Secretary highlighted that the Scottish Government will continue to use the “Invest in Scotland” prospectus as the Scotland-wide Portfolio, which contains a range of propositions across the cities. It is currently being rebranded under “Scotland is Now” and will be refreshed in the Summer

8. Dates of Future Meetings :

Delivery Group – Thursday 23rd August 2018 – Dundee

CEO Group – Friday 28th September 2018 – Edinburgh

Leadership Group – Monday 29th October 2018 – Inverness

The meeting finished at 12.30 pm.

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