



**Note of the Scottish Cities Alliance Leadership Group meeting  
Monday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018 11.00 am – 1.00 pm - Inverness**

**Attendees :**

Cllr Jennifer Laing	Co-Leader, Aberdeen City Council
Richard Sweetnam	Aberdeen City Council
Cllr John Alexander	Chair and Leader, Dundee City Council
David Martin	Chief Executive, Dundee City Council
Cllr Adam McVey	Leader, City of Edinburgh Council ( <i>via conference call</i> )
Sharon Thomson	Glasgow City Council ( <i>via conference call</i> )
Cllr Margaret Davidson	Leader, Highland Council
Donna Manson	CEO, Highland Council
Cllr Murray Lyle	Leader, Perth and Kinross Council
Jim Valentine	Depute Director, Perth and Kinross Council
Cllr Scott Farmer	Leader, Stirling Council ( <i>via conference call</i> )
Carol Beattie	Interim Chief Executive, Stirling Council ( <i>via conference call</i> )
Michael Matheson MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity ( <i>via conference call</i> )
Oonagh Gil	Deputy Director Enterprise and Cities, Scottish Government
Aileen Edwards	Programme Director, Scottish Cities Alliance

**Also in attendance :**

Stuart Black	Highland Council
Stuart Oliver	Stirling Council
Morag Watt	Cities Team, Scottish Government
Iain McCreaddie	Policy & Stakeholder Manager, Scottish Cities Alliance
Lillian McDowall	Communications and International Marketing Manager
Isabel McDermid	Admin & Finance Officer, Scottish Cities Alliance
Rebecca McDonald	Analyst, Centre for Cities (item 4)
Rachel Sunderland	Migration Strategy Team Leader, Scottish Government (item 5) ( <i>via conference call</i> )

**Apologies**

Andrew Kerr	Chief Executive, City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Susan Aitken	Leader, Glasgow City Council

**Note of meeting**

**1. Welcome, Introduction & Apologies**

The Chair welcomed the group and thanked Inverness for hosting the meeting. Introductions were made, and the Cabinet Secretary was welcomed to his first formal Alliance meeting. The Chair thanked the Cabinet Secretary for hosting a dinner with the Leaders on 24<sup>th</sup> October. Apologies were tabled as noted above.

**2. Note of Previous Meeting**

Matters arising :

- **Innovation Data** – It was noted that the SG will be circulating updated data on innovation to the cities when available.

- **SCDI's UKIS Working Group** – It was noted that discussions are ongoing with the group.
- **Enterprise and Skills – Strategic Board** – It was noted that no formal consultation was undertaken by the Strategic Board over the summer and that the [Strategic Plan](#) for the Board was published on 17<sup>th</sup> October. Inverness highlighted that key to the success of the Strategic Plan will be the ability to get all partners to engage fully in Community Planning. Mr Matheson noted the concerns.
- **TVL** - The Scottish Government advised that they are working closely with CoSLA to agree a process of engagement with local and national stakeholders to progress this agenda. This will be published shortly. The cities that are actively progressing work on TVL and agreed that it would be helpful to share the feedback they are receiving from local businesses and key stakeholders to allow the cities to work with them to address their concerns. The group agreed that TVL should remain on the Leadership Group agenda and should be seen as part of wider discussions the cities are keen to have regarding access to a wider suite of enabling powers for local government.
- **Skills and Talent Attraction** – it was noted that links to information on “My World My Work” were circulated to the Group on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018.
- **Annual Report 2017/2018** – This is now published on the Alliance website.

The note of the previous meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018 was approved and will now be published on the Alliance website.

### **3. Michael Matheson, Cabinet Secretary Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity**

The Cabinet Secretary thanked those who were at the Dinner on 24<sup>th</sup> October for attending and re-confirmed the importance of the Scottish Government working closely with cities and their regions as drivers of inclusive growth within local, regional and national economies. He noted the good progress made on the priorities in the Alliance's Operational Plan and advised that these should be kept under review in light of the changing policy environment. Several actions had been discussed and agreed at the dinner which he would come back to the cities on in due course.

The Cabinet Secretary highlighted that he was keen to look at a way to build the Alliance members into national policy making as a strategic sounding board on key issues such as migration and Brexit. This would allow the Scottish Government and its agencies to share thinking and test proposals with cities at an early stage in order to maximise the positive impact from these for cities and the economy, complementing the work of CoSLA.

Cllr Davidson highlighted the need for consideration to be given by the Scottish Government on its future approach to regional policy post Brexit, including the implications for cities and their regions. The Cabinet Secretary recognised the issues and challenges faced by the cities particularly around the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which would replace existing EU Structural Funds. Scottish Government is seeking clarity from UK Government and Mr Matheson offered to arrange a roundtable for the cities on this in the next couple of months with Michael Russell, Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations to hear views from the cities on post-Brexit regional policy thinking.

Cllr Davidson also raised the issue around underspend of current EU funds and the possibilities of utilising this. The cities highlighted they had projects which they were unable to progress as they were unable to identify the required match funding themselves. Mr Matheson undertook to look into the matter and revert to the group and cities were invited to forward potential projects to the Scottish Government for consideration to be given to addressing this issue.

### **4. “Talk of the Town :- the economic links between cities and towns”**

The Chair welcomed Rebecca McDonald, Analyst, Centre for Cities, and thanked her for coming from London to meet with the Group.

Rebecca shared research by the Centre for Cities which explored the economic relationship between cities and towns, and how this should inform policy. It was noted that investment in productive cities had wider benefits for their regions and travel to work areas. She highlighted that to maximise the economic impact of investment required a balance of investment in skills across the region in conjunction with improved transport links.

The group welcomed the presentation and agreed that it would be helpful to share this information with key stakeholders in the education sector to help them focus their activity to ensure the future skills needs of the local and national economy are met. It would also help inform regional discussions on priorities for transport and digital infrastructure investment to help unlock areas for greater job growth.

The group felt that there was an opportunity to build on this work at a Scottish level to set the context for a discussion round the interdependencies of Scotland's cities and towns, and how to maximise mutual economic benefits from investment. Alliance partners to consider how this could be progressed.

## **5. Migration**

Rachel Sunderland, Migration Strategy Team, joined the meeting and gave an overview of the current position.

The Chair advised that cities welcomed the roundtable discussion between the City Leaders and Dr Alasdair Allan MSP, the then Minister for International Development and Europe, on the migration needs of the Scottish cities and potential solutions for progressing these.

The cities highlighted their concerns about the impact of the recommendations from the Migration Advisory Committee on Scottish business, universities and public services in Scotland, perhaps due to a lack of detailed impact modelling on key sectors.

The group thanked Rachel agreed that the Alliance should:-

1. Establish a joint virtual working group of Alliance officers to reflect on the draft position statement, included in the meeting papers, and develop a strategic approach to informing the development of future UK Migration policy to be agreed by the city Leaders at a future meeting with Ben MacPherson, Minister for Europe, Migration and International Development.
2. Develop a response to any call for evidence the Migration Advisory Committee issues in connection with their review of the Shortage Occupation List.
3. Investigate opportunities to input to any engagement planned by the UK Government following the launch of the Migration White Paper.
4. Develop a Comms Plan to raise awareness of issues as well as proposed responses of cities to support migrants.

## **6. Director's Report**

The Programme Director gave an update on key programme developments since the last Leadership Group meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

The Chair acknowledged the work carried out and noted that the launch of the Investment Prospectus on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2018 was a great showcase of the value of the Alliance and received good press coverage. It was confirmed that the Alliance's new CRM system can be accessed, updated and tracked by each partner.

Savings made since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 were noted, and sponsorship income for the Investment Prospectus launch will be reported in the next quarter. The Chair indicated that it would be good to continue to increase sponsorship where possible. The budget to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 was approved and will be published on the Alliance website.

## 7. AOB

- **OECD Inclusive Growth Initiative** - the Chair noted that 5 cities had now joined the initiative and the remaining two cities were in the process of doing so.
- **Local Governance Review** – it was confirmed that a bespoke “Cities” workshop has been arranged for City Leaders on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018 in Edinburgh as part of the ongoing work by CoSLA to inform the Review. The Alliance will work with the Delivery Group to shape the format for the workshop to focus on the issues pertinent to cities.

## 8. Dates of Future Meetings :

- **Delivery Group** –13<sup>th</sup> November 2018 – Glasgow
- **CEO Group** – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018 – Scottish Enterprise discussion - Edinburgh
- **Delivery Group** – 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019 - Perth
- **CEO Group** – 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019 – Edinburgh
- **Leadership Group** – 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019 – Stirling

The meeting finished at 12.45 pm