



Note of the Scottish Cities Alliance Leadership Group meeting

Wednesday 6th September 2017 - Edinburgh

Attendees :

Cllr John Alexander	Chair & Leader, Dundee City Council
David Martin	Chief Executive, Dundee City Council
Cllr Adam McVey	Leader, City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr David McDonald	Depute Leader, Glasgow City Council
Annemarie O'Donnell	Chief Executive, Glasgow City Council
Cllr Graham Ross	Leader, Highland Council
Steve Barron	Chief Executive, Highland Council
Cllr Ian Campbell	Leader, Perth & Kinross Council
Jim Valentine	Depute Chief Executive, Perth & Kinross Council
Cllr Scott Farmer	Leader, Stirling Council
Stewart Carruth	Chief Executive, Stirling Council
Keith Brown MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
Paul Wheelhouse MSP	Minister for Business, Innovation & Energy
Oonagh Gil	Deputy Director for Enterprise and Cities, Scottish Government
Aileen Edwards	Programme Director, Scottish Cities Alliance

Also in attendance:-

Sharon Miller	Cities Team, Scottish Government
Simon Forrest	Scottish Government
Stuart Maxwell	Scottish Government
Gavin Barrie	Scottish Government (item 7)
Graham Roy	Fraser of Allander Institute (item 4)
Lynn Westwood	City of Edinburgh Council
Iain McCreaddie	Policy Manager, Scottish Cities Alliance
Lillian McDowall	Communications Manager, Scottish Cities Alliance
Isabel McDermid	Administrator, Scottish Cities Alliance

Apologies :-

Cllr Jennifer Laing	Leader, Aberdeen City Council
Angela Scott	Chief Executive, Aberdeen City Council
Andrew Kerr	Chief Executive, City of Edinburgh Council
Cllr Susan Aitken	Leader, Glasgow City Council
Cllr Margaret Davidson	Leader, Highland Council
Bernadette Malone	Chief Executive, Perth & Kinross Council

Note of meeting

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Introductions were made and apologies were tabled as noted above. It was noted that this is the first meeting of the newly formed Leadership Group.

2. Election of Chair

Cllr John Alexander was formally appointed as the new Chair of the Alliance. The Chair thanked the group for the appointment and welcomed the opportunity for the Leadership Group to move forward in a new and dynamic way.

3. Note of Previous Meeting

The note of the previous meeting on 21st February 2017 was approved and will now be published on the Alliance website.

4. “Role of cities as drivers of the Scottish Economy”

Professor Graeme Roy gave a presentation on the role of cities as drivers of the Scottish Economy, outlining the opportunities and challenges facing the Scottish economy. Discussion took place and a number of areas were identified that the Alliance could consider as part of the future operational programme:

- how the Alliance can contribute to improving productivity and economic growth;
- how the Alliance can contribute to reducing social and economic inequalities;
- potentially consider opportunities for the Alliance to support increased export activity to emerging markets
- look at how the innovation hubs across the cities can collaborate to deliver added value; and
- support key growth sectors including opportunities around marketing the life sciences capabilities across all the cities and supporting the expansion of Fintech beyond existing investment in Edinburgh.

The Chair thanked Professor Roy for the presentation and discussion.

5. Operational Plan and Budget – 2018-2022

Discussion took place on the outline Operational Plan tabled for discussion. It was agreed that the Alliance’s programme of activity should continue to focus on areas of activity where the greatest economic impact can be created through collaborative working facilitated by the Core Team. The group also highlighted that the Operational Plan should consider the issues raised in the earlier presentation by Graeme Roy and the opportunity for the cities to contribute to the discussions of the Scottish Government’s Strategic Board and Analytics Unit.

It was suggested that it would be helpful for the cities to better understand the added value offered through participation in Alliance projects. It was noted that internal briefings from council staff to City Leaders involved in Alliance projects along with the Alliance Programme Director’s Report would be a key source for this information.

The Chair reconfirmed that he very much saw the Alliance as an equal partnership of the 7 Scottish Cities and the Scottish Government and that he was keen to exploit the unique opportunities that this relationship presented in terms of future visioning, challenging each other and sharing knowledge and learning through ongoing dialogue.

The Leadership Group approved :

- The 3 strategic priorities for the Operational Plan 2018-2022.
- The delegation of authority to the CEO Group to oversee the development of the activities which will sit under the 3 approved strategic priorities including the allocation of remaining CIF monies and resources required to deliver the Operational Plan through to 31st March 2022. Formal approval to take place at the Leadership Group meeting on 5th December 2017.
- The Operational Budget for the Alliance 2018-2022 including the annual contributions from each of the partners.

6. Statement of Intent

Oonagh Gil, Deputy Director for Enterprise and Cities, Scottish Government, spoke to the paper tabled including a Statement of Intent which the Leaders and the Cabinet Secretary approved for signature. The Statement of Intent was signed by all partners committing the cities and Scottish Government to work together through the Alliance:

“Specifically, we will have a focus on promoting our cities and Scotland to bring jobs and investment to our cities for the benefit of the whole Scottish Economy. To do this we will:

- Take an inclusive approach to partnership working across political boundaries seeking the common ground to collaborate and achieve inclusive economic growth.
- Work together to develop and agree a four-year operational plan which sets out our strategic focus and collaborative activity.
- Be ambitious for our cities and for Scotland, working closely with private sector partners.
- Work together and with National Agencies to hone and promote Scotland’s investment opportunities, taking a Team Scotland approach, building on our strong national brand.
- Continue our commitment to make Scotland’s cities, smart cities, making best use of data and technology to improve services and attract investment.
- Work together to inform key policy discussion to ensure that Scottish Cities and their regions have the levers and collaborative working arrangements to allow them to compete, innovate and support inclusive economic growth.”

To support effective delivery of this it was agreed that the Core Team would facilitate discussions about the current meeting structure of the Alliance with all partners once the Operational Plan is approved, and work with partners to secure “think piece” speakers and project visits to highlight new ideas and share experience. The Leadership Group will be updated on progress in due course.

It was agreed that the Chair would ensure that key points raised during the roundtable discussion taking place with Lord Duncan directly after the Leadership Group meeting today be brought back to the group, including how the Scotland Office would wish to interact with the Alliance going forward.

7. Under2 Memorandum of Understanding

Gavin Barrie, Head of International Climate Change and Adaptation, Scottish Government, outlined the opportunity to sign the MoU and join a growing coalition of regions, states and cities, covering over 1 billion people and a third of the global economy, in support of the Paris Agreement on climate change. It was noted that a pledge by Scotland's cities to join the initiative would be a strong signal that Scotland is a leader at all levels of government in making the transition to a cleaner, sustainable, low carbon economy and society. The Chair thanked him for this information and proposed that the Alliance sign the MoU.

All partners agreed to formally sign the MOU and it was noted that Scottish Government will organise for formal signature to take place at a later date.

8. Directors Report

The Programme Director updated the Leadership Group on key progress and achievements made since the previous Leadership Group meeting.

The Cities Investment Fund budget report detailing approved spend and drawdowns to 30th June 2017 was noted. The Chair noted progress, and the Leadership Group approved the summarised version of the Budget to be published on the Alliance website.

The Chair suggested that the Leaders have the opportunity to meet to take forward and shape the direction of the Alliance, ensuring all contribute and challenge each other.

The group was keen to understand the collaborative opportunities offered by Innovation Hubs. The Scottish Government agreed to provide an update on activity underway which would help the cities identify potential opportunities for joint working.

9. AOB

No further business.

10. Date of Future Meetings

- Delivery Group – Thursday 21st September 2017 – Glasgow
- CEO group - Friday 27th October 2017 – Edinburgh
- Leadership Group - Tuesday 5th December 2017 - Perth
- Delivery Group – Tuesday 23rd January 2018 – Stirling
- CEO group Friday 26th January 2018 – Edinburgh
- Leadership Group – Wednesday 21st March 2018 – Inverness

Meeting finished at 12.45 pm