



**Note of the Scottish Cities Alliance Leadership Group meeting
Wednesday 23rd November 2022 – 9.30am – 11.30am**

Attendance:

Cllr Ian Yuill	Co-Leader, Aberdeen City Council
Angela Scott	Chief Executive, Aberdeen City Council
Cllr John Alexander	Leader, Dundee City Council (Chair)
Greg Colgan	Chief Executive, Dundee City Council
Cllr David Ross	Leader, Fife Council - Dunfermline
Cllr Cammy Day	Leader, The City of Edinburgh Council
Steve Grimmond	Chief Executive, Fife Council - Dunfermline
Cllr Susan Aitken	Leader, Glasgow City Council
Cllr Raymond Bremner	Leader, Highland Council - Inverness
Cllr Grant Laing	Leader, Perth & Kinross Council
Thomas Glen	Chief Executive, Perth & Kinross Council
Cllr Margaret Brisley	Depute Leader, Stirling Council
Carol Beattie	Chief Executive, Stirling Council
Iain McCreaddie	Programme Director, Scottish Cities Alliance

Also in attendance :

Catherine Brown	Scottish Government
Neil Cameron	Scottish Government
Claire Brook	Scottish Government
Andrew Robertson	Glasgow City Council (item 3)
Christina Kopanou	Glasgow City Council (item 3)
Anna Cartwright	UKIB (item 4)
Shailaja Annamraju	UKIB (item 4)
Hannah Fyfe	Aberdeen (item 5)
Allan Maguire	Aberdeen (item 5)
Ross MacKenzie	Dundee (item 5)
Graham Smith	Glasgow (item 5)
Steve MacDonald	Stirling (item 5)
Lauren Pascu	Scottish Cities Alliance
Isabel Brennan	Scottish Cities Alliance

Apologies received from:

Andrew Kerr	Chief Executive, The City of Edinburgh Council
Annemarie O'Donnell	Chief Executive, Glasgow City Council
Donna Manson	Chief Executive, Highland Council
Cllr Chris Kane	Leader, Stirling Council
John Swinney MSP	Deputy First Minister, Scottish Government
Colin Cook	Director of Economic Development, SG

1. Welcome, Introduction & Apologies

The Chair welcomed the group to the meeting. Apologies were noted as detailed above.

2. Note of Previous Meeting (21st September 2022)

The note of the previous meeting was approved and an update on items not covered elsewhere on the agenda was given as follows:-

Item 2 – Levelling Up – Following the re-appointment of Michael Gove as Levelling Up Secretary, the Alliance Chair has re-extended an invitation to the Cab Sec to speak to City Leaders in the new year to allow Leaders to provide some constructive feedback on the Levelling Up Agenda approach and how it can best support cities going forward. It was noted that the Alliance is working closely with the Cities and Local Growth Unit in UK Government to run a session with the Delivery Group sharing practice and experience across the cities with developing and submitting proposals for City Levelling Up projects.

Item 4 – John Swinney, Deputy First Minister of Scotland – Following the discussion with the Deputy First Minister at the last meeting on the National Strategy for Economic Transformation, the Scottish Government has published the Delivery Plan for the strategy and will begin discussions with the Alliance's Delivery Group regarding how they can support the Delivery Plan, ensuring that there is a clear line of sight on key elements of the plan of importance to the partnership including Programme 3 on productive businesses and regions.

Item 6 – Business Improvement Districts – The Aberdeen city BID is developing a paper for discussion with the Alliance's Delivery Group around establishing a better line of sight between the Scottish City BIDS and work underway by the Alliance to further the strategic objectives of the City Centre Recovery Taskforce. As agreed with City Leaders in Sept, any decision reached with the Delivery Group will be reported back to City Leaders before any activity with the City BIDS is progressed.

3. Cities and the Cost of Living

The Chair welcomed Andrew Robertson, Intelligence Hub Manager and Christina Kopanou, Economic Analyst, for the Glasgow City Region Intelligence Hub and thanked them for joining the meeting to give a very timely presentation on the Cost of Living Crisis across the Scottish city regions which is understandably a priority for all City Leaders at the moment given the very real impact it is having on their local economies and citizens.

Following the presentation, the Chair noted the scale of the challenge before the cities and the businesses and citizens they are home to and that more than ever there is a need for the Alliance partners to be focused on where they target resource to alleviate the very real pressures being felt right now. In discussion the following points were raised:-

- Leaders were keen to have sight of additional data on housing type and energy performance to inform thinking across local authorities as to the measures most appropriate to improving efficiency performance at a local level. The Intelligence Hub agreed to provide this data to the Alliance to circulate alongside an updated briefing report which took into account announcements from the UK Government's Autumn Statement on 17th November.
- It was noted that the issue of energy inefficient homes has been raised with CoSLA and the Scottish Government where the ask is that this be treated as a national investment priority and not left to tenants to pay.
- The Intelligence Hub highlighted that the short term response to many of the challenges highlighted in the briefing was to provide cash in hand where possible to target those most impacted whilst taking a medium to longer term approach which supported local communities and labour markets, including investing in improved transport infrastructure and addressing energy cost exposure for businesses in the manufacturing, hospitality and leisure sector.
- Cllr Aitken noted the real value the Glasgow City Region had received in having access to hard data at the local level to target resource and investment which they had previously allocated based on assumptions, and encouraged City Leaders and Scottish Government Ministers to consider the application of the briefing presented today internally.

The Chair thanked the Intelligence Hub for their briefing which the Programme Director noted would be fed into future discussions with the Alliance's Delivery and CEO Group and used to inform Alliance activity including its approach to Transition to Net Zero and the City Centre Recovery Taskforce.

4. UK Infrastructure Bank

The Chair welcomed Anna Cartwright, Head of the Local Authority Lending Division and Shailaja Annamraju, Deputy Chief Economist at the UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) and invited them to speak to the presentation tabled setting out opportunities for cities to work with the bank to support their just transition to net zero and regional and local economic growth.

Following the presentation the following points were raised in discussion:-

- Clarification was sought around the interaction of different forms of funding and the UKIB which can all support the cities to further net zero and regional and local economic growth priorities. On this specific point the UKIB clarified that subject to legislation going through Parliament they should be able to lend directly to local authorities unlike the Scottish National Investment Bank (SNIB). The UKIB recognised that there were a number of different interactions between different funding sources including the SNIB and they were in active conversation with them to ensure that collectively they maximise impact.
- Cities sought guidance on the support the bank is able to offer in terms of assisting cities with business case development and the detail required to meet the Treasury Green Book test. The UKIB indicated that they have had initial discussions with Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh and are open to speaking to the other cities about how they might support them at all stages to turn a wish list of projects into a pipeline and investable programme of activity. Work is currently underway to design a standard due-diligence process that should assist cities going forward.
- Reference was made to the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report's recommendations which note the importance of investing in both adaptation and mitigation and the UKIB advised that work was underway to understand how to begin to make the business case for adaptation projects investible.
- Points were raised around scale and the asset ownership following investment and how to get the balance right across local authorities between attracting investment and maintaining ownership of the assets. The UKIB's current approach is to work through this issue with local authorities on a case by case basis.

The Chair thanked the UKIB for the overview provided and extended an open invitation for them to visit and continue the dialogue with each of the cities.

5. Alliance Business Update

- **Scottish Cities Week – 24th – 26th January 2023**

The Programme Director spoke to the draft agenda for the week tabled and responded to questions raised by City Leaders at the last meeting and in subsequent correspondence. The Alliance will continue to work closely with the Investment Promotion Working Group officers across the cities to finalise the programme and collateral on the Alliance website which can support promotion of the propositions cities have indicated they would like to speak to at Cities week. Briefing arrangements are being set up with the speakers involved in each element of the Programme and the Alliance will work with City Officers to brief City Leaders ahead of their attendance.

- **Directors Report and Budget Update**

The Programme Director spoke to the report tabled noting the following items which would be of particular interest to Leaders:-

- The Alliance is working closely with the Investment Promotion Working Group to build an enhanced programme which supports wider individual Scottish city and Government involvement in UKREiIF 2023. Further information will be tabled at the next meeting of the Leadership Group.
 - The programme for the Scottish Schools Hydrogen Challenge 2022-2023 was noted in the report alongside discussions underway to run a higher profile final event in March next year.
 - An update on the timescales to report back to the Leadership Group on the Glasgow/Stirling led commission looking to increase residential capacity in cities and address issues related to vacant and derelict land as well as work with the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute on Net Zero Powers for local authorities was given. The Chair noted the desire to maintain pace with this work.
- **Budget** - The group noted the budget report tabled for the Cities Investment Fund to 30th September 2022 and approved the summary version for publication on the Alliance website.
 - **Update to Alliance Protocols** - It was noted that as of 1st October 2022, Dundee City Council has taken over the employment of Alliance staff and management of the Alliance's Operational Budget and this necessitates the need to update the governance protocols for the partnership. The Alliance Team will work with partners to update the protocols with the aim of tabling revised protocols for Leadership Group approval at the next meeting.

6. A.O.B

No other business was raised.

7. Dates of Future Meetings

- Leadership Group Meeting - Thursday 9th March 2023 – MS Teams

The meeting finished at 11.00 am.