

Environment and Economy Board Priorities

Summary and Recommendations

This paper provides an opportunity for the Board to discuss its priorities in light of the global Covid-19 pandemic and the long term goal of achieving a Just Transition to a net zero economy by no later than 2045. This paper seeks the views of members on which priorities could be adopted as part of a new Board Plan. The paper also invites comments on the format of the new Board Plan.

The Board is invited to:

- i. Agree the new strategic goal for the Board as a Just Transition to a Net Zero Economy no later than 2045
- ii. Agree, with any changes, the potential priority areas for the Board as set out in paragraph 6
- iii. Discuss the format of the current Board Plan and whether any changes should be made to the new Board Plan

References

Previous relevant reports:

- Environment and Economy Board June 2019 – Climate Change
- Environment and Economy Board June 2019 - Regional Economic Partnerships
- Environment and Economy Board September 2019 - Climate Change and Future Economic Policy- Discussion Paper
- Environment and Economy Board December 2019 – Climate Change
- Environment and Economy Board February 2020 - Green Growth Accelerator
- Environment and Economy Board June 2020 - Covid-19 - Economic & Environmental Recovery and Renewal
- Environment and Economy Board June 2020 - Covid-19 – Employability Response

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Environment and Economy Board Priorities

Purpose

1. This paper provides an opportunity for the Board to discuss its priorities in light of the global Covid-19 pandemic and the long term goal of achieving a just transition to a net zero economy by no later than 2045.

Current Position

2. The current Environment and Economy Board Plan was agreed in 2017 after the Local Government elections. It has evolved in the intervening period but the main structure is largely unchanged. In March this year Leaders agreed that COSLA should devote all its resource to tackle the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Since then the work of the team has been focused on supporting, firstly, the emergency response and, secondly, the recovery from the crisis. Members were given an update on the work of COSLA over this period at the June meeting of the Board. As a result of responding to the crisis the Board Plan no longer accurately represents the work being carried out by COSLA on the behalf of the Board. This paper provides an opportunity for members to reset the priorities of the Board to better reflect the continued impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and our longer term objectives for the environment and the economy.
3. The Board has had a number of reports on the interrelationship between economic and environment policy. In September 2019 the Board agreed a series of statements which were intended to provide the basis of a new Board position on the environment and economy. In June 2020 the Board discussed the environment and economic impact of the global Covid-19 crisis and agreed a position which built on the September paper. This is set out in Annex A. This paper discusses what this position could mean for the Boards ongoing policy priorities.
4. This report also takes account other, related positions adopted by the Board. One such example is the position established last year that the Board recognised the importance of addressing the loss of biodiversity alongside our work on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

What is Changing?

5. The global Covid-10 pandemic and climate crisis has required a review of the policy priorities of the Board.

COSLA Position

6. Building on the positions previously established it is proposed that the Board sets its overall strategic goal as a Just Transition to a Net Zero Economy no later than 2045. We refer to this strategic goal throughout this report as securing a Just Transition. It is proposed that all work of the team is focused on this goal. This will require some policy work to be strengthened, with other areas having less focus in future. The following bullet points describe what this could mean in practice:
 - **Transport** work will be refocused to public transport, electric vehicles and charging infrastructure and active travel. This has happened as a result of responding to the pandemic and we may wish to continue with the this focus over the medium to long term.

- **Waste** will continue to require work, especially those areas which will have the biggest impact on a Just Transition. This is likely to include areas such as biodegradable landfill ban, circular economy and extended producer responsibility.
 - **Digital Connectivity**, including R100 and UK Government programmes, is likely to need more work in future if we are to play a fuller role in policy development and implementation at Scottish and UK level and if we are to take advantage of remote working trends established during the pandemic
 - **Energy** will likely have to be major area of work and, within COSLA, we may need to strengthen resources attached to energy policy, including energy efficiency and the decarbonisation of heat networks. Decarbonising heat will be a critical component of a net zero economy and society. For this to happen effectively there will need to be a discussion with the Community Wellbeing Board as home energy efficiency and the Energy Efficient Scotland programme is one of its responsibilities.
 - **Planning** work will continue but it is likely to be focused on planning as an enabling and place making tool. We will also need to continue to work on the resourcing of the planning service.
 - **Regeneration** will likely assume new prominence in the recovery. We will continue to support the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund.
 - **Economic policy** will also be a major area, with possible areas of work being green growth accelerator, capital investment in low carbon infrastructure and the role of regional partnerships in a Just Transition.
 - **Climate Change** policy will continue to be a major priority as we try to influence redevelopment of the climate change plan due to be published at the end of the year. It will be important to dedicate policy time to keep track of national and international developments, including preparation for COP 26 next year in Glasgow.
 - **Replacement of European Funds** and related European and international initiatives will take on renewed prominence as the UK shared prosperity fund develops and the transition period ends.
7. The above bullet points are intended to provide a general indication of the potential priority areas for the Board. If members are content that this is a credible, high level description of the priorities which should define the work of the Board, then we will start the process of developing them into a new Board Plan. In developing the priorities into a Board plan we will need to take into account several issues. The first, is what we do with other existing work areas that are not set as priorities. We wish to avoid a cliff edge where we stop work entirely on areas that could still benefit from our input. We therefore view the development of a new Board Plan as a process rather than a one off event so it may take a number on months to get to the point where we are entirely focused on the new priorities.
8. One such area may be the Crown Estate. COSLA has been active in supporting the devolution of the Crown Estate to Local Authorities for many years. We do not propose to disengage entirely on the Crown Estate as it is valuable to maintain a relationship with both Marine Scotland and Crown Estate Scotland. However, once we have reached the point where we have agreed a new distribution methodology for the disbursement of revenue raised locally from Crown Estate assets, we will have an opportunity to reevaluate our level of involvement. One option would be to continue to offer assistance to Councils with a keen interest in the Crown Estate where this was needed, in a similar fashion to the support we offered during the passage of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.
9. It is likely that we will need to prioritise even within the areas listed in paragraph 6. On transport, for example, if we are to agree the strategic goal of a Just Transition then this

would tend to suggest we focus on those areas most critical to the decarbonisation of transport. This may mean we focus less on roads and related policy than we have in the past. That said, as we are proposing setting the goal as a Just Transition we have to continue to recognise the importance of car usage for many parts of Scotland. Likewise, the setting of the proposed strategic goal will require some careful consideration of our work on economic policy, with a greater leaning towards measures which support, what is sometimes referred to, as a wellbeing economy. What we therefore propose is not a stark cut off of some of our existing work but a thoughtful consideration of how the work of the team and COSLA contributes to the proposed strategic goal within the resources we have available to us. We will also work with our professional partners such as SCOTS, SLAED and HOPS on how COSLA can continue to contribute to their ongoing work and vice versa.

10. The second issue is that we recognise that within the team we do not have the resources to work on all of these areas concurrently, so the priority of this work needs to be considered alongside the work of other teams and Boards within COSLA. There was a discussion at Leadership Sounding Board on 14 August on the prioritisation of COSLA business which started this process and a further discussion will take place at Leaders on 28 August. The process of developing the Board Plan will need to take into account the availability of resource within the team and across COSLA but this will be discussed with the Board as the Plan takes shape. The third issue, is that we are may to have to respond to external factors which will have a bearing on our work. This could include a second wave on the virus over the autumn and winter and the end of the UK/EU transition period at the end of the year.
11. Another intention behind reviewing the Plan is to allow for the better consideration of the linkage between different policy areas. By proposing the strategic goal of a Just Transition we intend in future to better reflect the interdependency of different policy areas. The current pandemic is a case in point. It is recognised that climate change and the degradation of natural environments across the world is a factor behind the emergence of new diseases¹. The exact origins of the pandemic have yet to be discovered but what is not uncertain is the global public health and economic crises which have resulted. The linkage between the environment, human health and wellbeing and the economy has rarely been clearer². As the new Board Plan will be a response to the crises this paper argues that it is important that it recognises the probable underlying causes of the pandemic. As a result, while we have not listed biodiversity policy, for example, as one of the priorities under paragraph 6, we believe we will need to consider how all our policy objectives support the general position we have taken which is address the continuing loss of biodiversity. A report on how the Board could support work on biodiversity is an option for the meeting on 23 October.
12. The achievement of a Just Transition will also not take place without addressing inequality within society. As a result while we are proposing the Board sets a Just Transition as its strategic goal, to succeed we will need to look outwards to the work of other Boards within COSLA. For example, as we seek to recover from the pandemic, job retention, retraining and reskilling will become a major priority as we respond to the developing downturn. Whilst the work on employability is led by the Community Wellbeing Board we should seek to advise from the prospective of our proposed strategic goal as its recognised by the likes of the Climate Change Commission³ that training will be an important element in our transition to a net zero economy.

¹ <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/six-nature-facts-related-coronaviruses>

² <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/05/5-reasons-why-biodiversity-matters-human-health-economies-business-wellbeing-coronavirus-covid19-animals-nature-ecosystems/>

³ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/reducing-uk-emissions-2020-progress-report-to-parliament/#key-findings>

13. The presentation to the Board on the work of North Ayrshire Council on Community Wealth Building is another example of how we hope in future to better integrate the priorities of the Board around a common, long term objective.

Next Steps

14. If the Board agrees we will work on a draft Board Plan for the October meeting. If the Board is happy with the Plan as it takes shape we will continue to refine it for future meetings. We are also happy to take comments on the current format of the Board Plan so that we can improve it for future meetings. To aid this discussion a copy of the June 2020 Board Plan is attached as Annex B.

Annex A - The position agreed by the Board in June 2020

- We need to maintain our overall goal of working towards achieving a zero carbon, inclusive economy. Fairness must be at the heart of our response given the disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 crisis on certain groups in society, the least well off and the most vulnerable.
- This Board has already agreed to support the principles of a just transition to a net zero society and economy. For any transition to be fair it seems likely the burden of climate change adaptation and mitigation will have to be shouldered by those most responsible. This principle is now more important than ever.
- We must focus on activities which will have the biggest contribution to achieving a zero carbon inclusive economy and society. From the perspective of this Board this could mean prioritising work on energy efficiency and related policy and on transport, but other areas will also need a keen focus e.g. waste and the circular economy. There will be other areas which will need a similar focus from other teams in COSLA.
- Transport is an important sector in the short term as we look to ease the lockdown. We do not wish to see a rapid increase in car usage and congestion, but this is likely if people do not wish to use public transport. We will need to encourage a new travel hierarchy which emphasises the need for continued working from home where this is possible.
- Digital investment, already an area of vital importance, will have renewed significance not just in terms of infrastructure and new technology but in how people can access online services. We must seek to close the digital divide once and for all.
- No matter the economic impact of the current crisis our short and medium term response will be crucial to our longer term goals. Unemployment will rise and we will need to determine interventions which both aid people back into work but also stimulate the types of jobs that we need for the low carbon economy. No matter how successful we become in this aim, there will be some areas, sectors, people and groups that will remain disproportionately affected by economic and societal changes. How we provide support for people in this position will determine how fair, ultimately the new economy will become.
- This is now a time to push further to redefine our economic success criteria. We have already recognised that we need to develop a more rounded definition of what constitutes future economic success in the low carbon era, beyond measurements such as economic growth or gross domestic product (GDP). The National Performance Framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals provide the basis to do this, and we now have an opportunity to put this into practice in policy terms.
- We must also continue to make the case that only an empowered Local Government will be able to respond successfully to the current crisis and make a valued contribution towards achieving a zero carbon, inclusive economy and society. We must not be afraid to take risks and must champion the devolution of power and responsibility as one of the main ways we can give communities more control at a time of potentially unprecedented change. This is also a route to ensuring that we take a place based approach to rebuilding the economy fairly and sustainably.

Environment and Economy Board Plan – June 2020

The Board Plan contains two COSLA Priorities:

- **Priority 4: Local Economies and Inclusive Growth**
- **Priority 7: UK Exit from the European Union**

Priority 1: Broadband				
Activity	Current Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status
Development of the Reaching 100% (R100) Superfast Broadband and mobile infill projects Lead: Robert	<p>The pandemic has impacted on the delivery of digital programmes.</p> <p>Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands wrote to all Scottish Local Authorities and COSLA on 8 April 2020, highlighting the recent Scottish Government guidance for businesses and construction. The key points of the letter now appear as a factsheet on the Scottish Government C-19 guidance webpages and was brought to the attention of both broadband and mobile network operators. This can be accessed here.</p> <p>Over £463 million is being invested in the Scotland-wide DSSB programme through two contracts, the Highland & Islands Enterprise area (HIE) and the Rest of Scotland (RoS). Openreach has already met their final contractual targets in both the HIE and RoS areas. The focus is now on utilising remaining capital expenditure which has resulted from innovation, efficiency and the second tranche of early gainshare.</p>	<p>Contracts covering South and Central Scotland lots have been awarded to BT Plc.</p> <p>R100 commitment to be fully delivered likely by 2023, as opposed to end of this Parliament in 2021 as</p>	<p>The R100 project has a stated aim of providing superfast broadband to 100% of premises. COSLA supports this commitment.</p>	<p>BT Plc has been confirmed as the bidder for two of the three (R100) broadband programme areas in Scotland. the awarding of the contract.</p>

	<p>Operators are continually monitoring and reviewing the potential wide-ranging impact of Covid-19 on delivery.</p> <p>We understand that work in preparation by BT for the R100 programme has been, to date, largely desk based so has only been minimally affected by the lock down and the need to maintain physical distancing.</p> <p>Work on the 4G infill has continued although work on building new structures has been postponed</p>	announced initially.		
Priority 2: Climate Change & Energy				
Activity	Current Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status
<p>Development of the Climate Change Bill & implementation of the Climate Change Plan and allied Energy Policy</p> <p>Lead: Silke, and Judith for Brussels Office</p>	<p>COSLA's normal work on Climate Change has been suspended to allow for work to continue on the Covid-19 response.</p> <p>In April the Scottish Government made the decision to postpone the publication of the Climate Change Plan. The cross-party group which was set up to advise on the development of the Climate Change Plan was refigured by the Cabinet Secretary into a forum to advise on a green recovery and met on 21 May. The COSLA Spokesperson attended the meeting.</p> <p>We have started to consider how our climate change goals can be delivered as part of a 'green' recovery from the Covid-19 emergency. This is discussed further under agenda item 4.</p> <p>We also are aware that COP 26 has been postponed until November 2021.</p>	<p>The Climate change Plan publication is postponed. We will update the Board when we have more information.</p>	<p>Local authorities are recognised as a crucial partner in achieving the Scottish 2045 net zero climate change targets.</p> <p>Local authorities have influence commensurate with their commitment to and responsibility in delivering energy policy.</p>	<p>COSLA remains committed to tackling Climate Change and supports the 2045 target in the Climate Change Act.</p>

Priority 3: Crown Estate				
Activity	Current Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status
<p>The Act is implemented leading to the successful devolution of the Crown Estate to Local Authorities</p> <p>Lead: Elisa</p>	<p>COSLA's normal work on the Crown Estate has been suspended to allow for work to continue on the Covid-19 response</p> <p>Scottish Government wrote to Local Authorities on 8 April to indicate that any remaining funds from the 2019/20 allocation of net revenues generated by Crown Estate assets out to 12nm could be directed to support businesses, including third sector organisations, in genuine need arising from Covid-19. Support would still need to align with the general purpose of the funds to deliver benefit to coastal communities.</p> <p>Scottish Government have indicated their intention to distribute the next tranche of net revenue generated from the Scottish Crown Estate's assets as early as practically possible during the 2020/21 financial year. We are working with MS officials to establish timescales for this. This funding will be distributed using the current interim formula.</p> <p>Scottish Government were planning on publishing the Strategic Management Plan for the Scottish Crown Estate by Spring 2020, setting out objectives and priorities for Scottish Crown Estate assets including seabed leasing rights out to 200 nautical miles and outlining how around half of Scotland's foreshore as well as rural and urban property will be managed in ways that benefit communities.</p> <p>The Act is being commenced in a phased approach. Sections relating to the Strategic Management Plan and other Scottish Ministers' powers and duties were brought into force on 1 June 2019. The second commencement regulation is expected to be laid in Parliament in early 2020. This regulation is expected to commence the sections relating to:</p>	<p>We will update the Board when we have more information on key future milestones.</p>	<p>It is our aim to secure the maximum possible devolution of the Crown Estate to Local Government as per the stated wishes of the Smith Commission.</p>	<p>Normal work on the Crown Estate has been suspended.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name change from Crown Estate Scotland (Interim Management) to Crown Estate Scotland; • New or revised duties and powers for a Scottish Crown Estate manager; • Financial and reporting matters; • The Schedules in the Act. <p>Work will begin on the third commencement regulation regarding the Transfer and Delegation provisions later in the year.</p> <p>We reported in February that COSLA officials were working with Scottish Government and Crown Estate Scotland to progress the review of the methodology for distribution of net revenue from Scottish Crown Estate marine assets in the 0-12 nautical mile zone. At the time the Crown Estate Scotland committed to submitting a paper setting out options for the review of the methodology to COSLA and SG officers by end of March 2020. The need to focus on the Covid-19 response has meant that this work has not been completed as originally proposed.</p> <p>Officers are also in discussion with Scottish Government to develop proportionate reporting arrangements and associated guidance for spending net revenue allocations from marine assets out to 12 nautical miles and will report to the Board at key junctures as this work develops.</p>			
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Priority 4: Local Economies and Inclusive Growth (COSLA Priority)

Activity	Current Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status
Implementation of the Enterprise and Skills Review Lead: Calum	<p>COSLA's normal work on economic policy has been suspended to allow for work to continue on the Covid-19 response.</p> <p>The focus of COSLA's work has been on the emergency response to the crisis. An update will be provided on the work undertaken to support businesses which have been affected by the lockdown.</p>	<p>We will update the Board when we have more information on key future milestones.</p>	<p>The Review was intended to deliver a step-change in economic performance along with a</p>	<p>Normal work on the economic policy has been suspended.</p>

	<p>Agenda item 4 sets out the impact of the crisis on the economy of Scotland and what this may mean for the recovery phase if we are hold to our long term goal of building a zero carbon, inclusive economy.</p> <p>A meeting between the COSLA Spokesperson and Fiona Hyslop took place on 2 April to discuss the economic response to the crisis. The meeting focused on business support and improving coordination between COSLA and Scottish Government on the crisis. A second meeting with the Cabinet Secretary will take place on 27 May.</p> <p>A verbal update on business support will also be provided at the meeting under agenda item 5. Additionally, agenda item 6 covers the employability response to the current crisis</p>		<p>simplification of the system for customers. COSLA supports this aim and seeks to deepen local government's influence on national policy to assist Councils with local delivery.</p>	
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Priority 5: Planning

Activity	Current Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status
<p>Improving planning performance and resourcing of the system, including new proposals in the 2019 Act.</p> <p>Lead: Calum</p>	<p>COSLA's normal work on the planning has been suspended to allow for work to continue on the Covid-19 response.</p> <p>See Agenda Item 9</p>	<p>We will update the Board when we have more information on key future milestones.</p>	<p>The performance of the planning system continues to improve and deliver better outcomes for communities. Local Authorities are fully resourced to deliver a</p>	<p>Normal work on planning has been suspended.</p>

			high-quality planning system.	
Priority 6: Transport				
Activity	Current Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status
<p>Final stages of the development of the National Transport Strategy (NTS) and implementation of the key sections of the Transport Act.</p> <p>Lead: Elisa and John</p>	<p>See Agenda Item 8</p> <p>COSLA's normal work on the transport has been suspended to allow for work to continue on the Covid-19 response.</p> <p>Due to the impact of COVID-19 on normal operations and resource the implementation of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2020 is currently delayed.</p> <p>Work on the National Transport Strategy and the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 has also been paused for the time being.</p> <p>The Bus Partnership Fund is on hold and no longer being launched this Spring as previously planned. Transport Scotland intend to review the Fund's timeline with COSLA and other stakeholders at an appropriate point.</p>	<p>We will update the Board when we have more information on key future milestones.</p>	<p>We want a strategy that adds value and clearly shows it will improve outcomes. Specifically, it needs to support other/wider policy aims, including climate change targets, planning reform and genuinely sustainable economic development.</p>	<p>Normal work on transport policy has been suspended.</p>

Priority 7: UK Exit from the European Union (COSLA Priority)					
Activity	Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status	
<p>Replacement of EU Funds after the UK's Exit and related policy</p> <p>Lead: Robert, Serafin and James</p>	<p>See agenda item 10</p> <p>Separate from to issues around current EU funding spend there has been little progress over their eventual replacement in the shape of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). However, in addition to a number of general announcements about specific support for local areas post Brexit, the UK consultation on the UKSPF has been further delayed to later in 2020.</p> <p>In addition to facilitating a number of sessions last year COSLA officers have continued discussions with UK civil servants leading this work. The UK Government will be offered a range of options to deal with inclusive growth post Brexit replacing both existing EU and domestic funds as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review.</p> <p>COSLA and Councils have made representations to UK and Scottish Ministers and contributed to various UK and Scottish Parliamentary inquiries and cross-party groups on this issue.</p> <p>COSLA has also been invited to attend a Scottish Government steering group to develop the Scottish view on the Shared Prosperity Fund, and a Scottish Government consultation has been launched ending 12 February 2020 prior to the UK one being potentially launched in the Spring. On the back of prior positions from this Board and an updated paper with further input by Council officers which was agreed by January Leaders COSLA has contributed to this Scottish Government consultation and a related one on European Territorial Cooperation (INTERREG).</p> <p>Due to Coronavirus further work on Scottish and UK preparations has slowed with UK Ministers indicating that instead of a full UK consultation it might table the UKSPF proposal on the back of the consultations carried out so far.</p>	<p>April 2020 SG delayed position on replacement EU funding</p> <p>Spring 2020 – UKSPF consultation or UK announcement</p> <p>31 December 2020 – end of current programming period and last date current programmes could get funding.</p> <p>31 December 2023 maximum deadline to spend current EU allocations and for any UK replacement funds to kick in.</p>	<p>The desired outcome is a replacement for EU funds which are locally led and keep the main features of the EU Structural Funds.</p> <p>Rights and powers of Scottish Councils are preserved and advanced in repatriation of EU powers & new relationship with EU.</p> <p>A new common framework for international engagement is developed with Councils.</p>	<p>The Covid-19 crisis has impacted upon European and International work. COSLA is working with key departments in UK and Scottish Government, and our peers from the rest of the UK to get the best possible picture for Local Government although some timescales have changed. Working with UK Mission to EU, SG and others in setting-up UK Brussels-based Office group (BBUKOO), were COSLA chairs the Sustainability Task Group; responding to various</p>	

<p>Repatriation of EU powers & UK-EU level playing field</p> <p>Lead: Brussels Office</p>	<p>On ESF and ERDF suspension, progress was made following intensive discussions between the Environment and Economy Spokesperson and the Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation at the start of the year. Claims made by local authorities are now being processed and there is a commitment that this will continue despite the suspension. COSLA officers and Local Government partners are in ongoing discussions on additional information requested by the Managing Authority from Lead Partners to work towards the lifting of the suspension. These discussions have been constructive.</p> <p>In March and April and as a response to COVID-19 the European Commission launched two Coronavirus Response Investment Initiatives (CRII) that effectively allow managing authorities to reallocate ongoing programmes and exempt from the obligation of providing domestic match funding. Lead partners and COSLA officers have had various exchanges with the Scottish Government which has in turn been considering with the UK and the other Devolved Governments whether there is added value of requesting the appropriate changes to the existing Operational Programmes.</p> <p>Assessment of the repatriation of EU powers on Environment and Economy matters & the set-up of regulatory and enforcement common UK frameworks and agencies.</p> <p>Working with UK and EU counterparts in developing new engagement on Economy and Environment matters.</p> <p>On the back of the February Leaders paper the COSLA President wrote on 6 of May to the Prime Minister and Cabinet Secretary Mike Russell asking for clarifications on the issue of common frameworks and the implications from local government of the ongoing UK-EU negotiation, including participating in future EU programmes such as Interreg.</p>			<p>consultations on repatriated powers, cooperation with our sister organisations via CEMR, CoR.</p> <p>Initial consultation carried out with Councils. New partnership working with CEMR, our sister organisations, Covenant of Mayors, OECD, UN being developed.</p> <p>Discussions with UK Government on Local Government element of COP26 official programme.</p>
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<p>Post Brexit EE international engagement Lead: Brussels Office.</p>	<p>Scoping exercise as requested by March 2019 Convention on beyond Brexit international engagement opportunities for Local Government continued (including on matters relevant to the EE Board such as Global Covenant of Mayors, OECD, UN HABITAT, UNECE and UN Climate Conference Glasgow 2020). Main findings to be presented to Convention.</p> <p>COP 26 and related international sustainability initiatives such as the Edinburgh biodiversity process has been postponed to next year due to COVID but COSLA work is continuing at good pace including engagement with international local and regional government partners and Scottish and UK Government.</p>			
Priority 8: Waste				
Activity	Current Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status
<p>Development of the Scottish Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), monitoring of 2021 Biodegradable Landfill Ban, policy on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Lead: Silke</p>	<p>COSLA's normal work on waste policy has been suspended to allow for work on the Covid-19 response.</p> <p>See agenda item 7</p>	<p>We will update the Board when we have more information on key future milestones.</p>	<p>The SG/COSLA strategic waste management steering group is able to take a look at the wide range of developments in waste management, in the round, and consider effective ways to develop services in the</p>	<p>Normal work on waste policy has been suspended.</p>

			<p>medium to longer term.</p> <p>We want to influence positively the implementation of the DRS and for it to complement existing kerbside recycling.</p> <p>We want Councils to be able to meet the Landfill Ban at the earliest opportunity and a transition plan that is practical and effective.</p> <p>We want any new UK policy on EPR to bring maximum benefit and control to Scotland and Scottish Local Authorities.</p>	
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