

COSLA Plan 2022-2027

Summary and Recommendations

In June 2022, after the first COSLA Convention meeting since the 2022 Local Elections, COSLA Convention agreed that a new COSLA Plan should be drafted to guide the work we do for Local Government in Scotland for the subsequent five year administrative period. The Plan presents a high-level framework which sets out the strategic direction and ambitions for COSLA for the current Local Government term (Appendix I) and is based on the Blueprint for Local Government, previously agreed by Convention. After discussion, and agreement that endorsement of the final draft be delegated to Leaders, a number of suggested amendments were received from Convention and from members of Leadership Sounding Board which were incorporated into the final draft plan.

In November 2022 COSLA Leaders approved the final COSLA Plan 2022-2027 and agreed for it to be submitted to the next Convention meeting for formal endorsement.

COSLA Convention is invited to endorse the final COSLA Plan 2022-2027 as approved by Leaders in November 2022.

References

Previous reports:

- 22-11-25 Item 04 – COSLA Plan
- 22-10-28 Item 05 – COSLA Plan
- 22-06-17 Item 10 – COSLA’s strategic context and priorities for the new COSLA Plan
- 22-02-25 Item 06 – COSLA’s strategic context and priorities post-election
- 21-03-26 Item 03 – Local Government Blueprint
- 17-06-30 Item 09 – COSLA Plan 2017/18 – 2021/22

Garrick Smyth
Policy Manager – Corporate
garrick@cosla.gov.uk
0131 474 9285

March 2023

COSLA Plan 2022 – 2027

Background & Purpose

1. In June 2022 COSLA Convention agreed that a new COSLA Plan should be developed and that it should be based on the priorities set out in the Blueprint for Local Government; but updated to reflect the present post Covid-19 operating context. It was also agreed that the Plan would be subject to regular review in order to respond to any changes in context and guide the work we do for Local Government in Scotland during the next five-year administrative term.
2. Following a review of a draft and input from Convention in October, and from Leadership Sounding Board in November, the draft Plan was presented to Leaders in November. General agreement and support for the priorities, outcomes, and actions was secured.
3. The Convention meeting in October had offered a range of suggested revisions and enhancements to the draft plan; significantly the suggestion to emphasise the importance of encouraging innovative approaches within Councils to addressing the challenges we face. Convention agreed to continue consideration of the Plan to allow officers to accommodate the suggestions made by Convention; and agreed that endorsement of the final draft be delegated to Leaders. This allowed for a revised draft COSLA Plan to be presented to, and approved by, Leaders last November on the basis that an update report would be taken to the meeting of Convention today.

What is changing?

4. Below is a summary of the revisions accommodated within the approved COSLA Plan as a result of the suggestions made by Convention in October.
 - The COSLA Plan places emphasis on the current severe strategic and operational pressures and threats faced by Local Government in Scotland; whilst acknowledging that the Plan will be reviewed, at least annually, to accommodate changes of these pressures over the next 5 years.
 - The requirement to emphasise the value of innovation in terms of the development of policies and services which respond to the multiple crises facing local economies, households and public services has been given prominence in the Plan.
 - The general tone and language used in the Plan is robust and assertive in championing the position and interests of the role of Local Government.
 - Convention will be provided with updates on progress toward the Priorities set out in the Plan and success criteria can be designed to be integral to that reporting process.
 - A number of specific changes to wording throughout the draft Plan were also made in line with suggestions provided by Convention.

5. COSLA Convention is invited to endorse the final COSLA Plan 2022-2027 as approved by COSLA Leaders in November 2022.

March 2023