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MINUTE OF MEETING OF ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY BOARD (DRAFT)

Friday, 14 February 2020 at 1030hrs
COSLA, Verity House, 19 Haymarket Yards, Edinburgh

Present

COSLA Spokesperson	Councillor Steven Heddle
Aberdeenshire Council	Councillor Jeff Hutchison
Argyll and Bute Council	Councillor Aileen Morton
City of Edinburgh Council	Councillor George Gordon
Clackmannanshire Council	Councillor Donald Balsillie
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Councillor Archie Dryburgh
East Ayrshire Council	Councillor Jim Roberts
East Dunbartonshire Council	Councillor Graeme McGinnigle
Falkirk Council	Councillor John Patrick
Fife Council	Councillor Altany Craik
Glasgow City Council	Councillor Anna Richardson
Highland Council	Councillor Duncan Macpherson
Midlothian Council	Councillor Russell Imrie
Moray Council	Councillor David Bremner
North Ayrshire Council	Councillor Alex Gallagher
North Lanarkshire Council	Councillor Meghan Gallacher
Orkney Islands Council	Councillor Graham Sinclair (video conf.)
Perth and Kinross Council	Councillor Angus Forbes
Renfrewshire Council	Councillor John McNaughton
Scottish Borders Council	Councillor Mark Rowley
Shetland Islands Council	Councillor Robbie McGregor (Substitute)
South Lanarkshire Council	Councillor John Anderson
West Dunbartonshire Council	Councillor Iain McLaren
HOPS	Forbes Barron
Improvement Scotland	Irene Beautyman
Salix Finance Ltd	Jack Saunders (Observer)
Scottish Government	Robbie McGhee (Guest)
Scottish Natural Heritage	Mark Wrightham (Guest)
SCOTS	Ewan Wallace
Sustainable Network Scotland	Lorna Jarvie

Apologies

Aberdeen City Council	Vacant
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Angus Council
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Dundee City Council
East Lothian Council
East Renfrewshire Council
Inverclyde Council
South Ayrshire Council
Shetland Islands Council
Stirling Council
West Lothian Council

Councillor Ron Sturrock
Councillor Donald Crichton
Councillor Alan Ross
Councillor Norman Hampshire
Councillor Alan Lafferty
Councillor Colin Jackson
Councillor Brian McGinley
Councillor Ryan Thomson*
Councillor Evelyn Tweed
Councillor Cathy Muldoon

NHS Health Scotland
Regional Transport Partnership
SLAED
SOLACE
SOLACE

Gerry McCartney
Rab Dickson
Pamela Smith
Steve Grimmond
Jim Valentine

**Denotes substitute provided*

Apologies are recorded where notified in advance or sederunt not signed

Public Session

Welcome and Apologies

The Environment and Economy Spokesperson thanked everyone for their attendance and welcomed substitute Members. Apologies were noted.

1. Minute of Previous Meeting of 6 December 2019 and Matters Arising (paper)

The Minute of the Environment and Economy Board meeting held on 6 December 2019 was accepted as a true record.

Most matters arising were covered on the Agenda or the Board Plan.

2. Environment and Economy Board Plan December 2019 (paper)

Members received an update on the Board Plan and were invited to raise any questions. The Board Plan update was agreed.

3. Presentation on R100

The Board received a presentation on the progress of the Scottish Government Reaching 100% (R100) programme by Robbie McGhee, Deputy Director, Digital Connectivity Division. The presentation provided an overview of work carried out to date on the programme and set out past and likely future engagement with Local Authorities. Robbie indicated he wished Councils to be aware of activity in their area in order that they could support deployment and stakeholder engagement. The presentation also provided information on R100 vouchers, indicating that anyone who cannot access superfast broadband by the end of 2021 will be eligible for a voucher, regardless of whether or not R100 contract build will ultimately reach them.

The presentation was circulated to the Board after the meeting, and Members were invited to contact COSLA officers or Robbie directly if they had further questions or required more information.

4. Conference of the Parties (COP)

A verbal update was provided on Conference of Parties (COP)

5. Suspension of European Social Funds

A verbal update was provided on the suspension of Europeans Social Fund

6. Public Health Reform (paper)

The paper provided the Board with an update on the progress of the reform of public health, the joint programme between COSLA and the Scottish Government. The paper provided updates on the three areas of the reform programme including the establishment of Scotland's new public health body.

The Board:

- i. Noted and provided comment on the progress of the joint programme of reform; and
- ii. Recognised the cross-cutting nature of this programme of work and advocated for the ongoing resource and capacity required in Local Government to progress the aspirations of public health reform including the fulfilment of the public health priorities.

7. National Transport Strategy (paper)

The Board was provided with an update on National Transport Strategy (NTS2), which was laid before Parliament and published on 4 February 2020. The report asked Members to discuss and agree COSLA's position to inform engagement around the delivery of NTS2 as well as provided an update on work surrounding transport governance. Members stressed that work at both officer and political level on the delivery of the strategy should give adequate recognition to Local Authorities' role in this agenda, as well as capture the range of needs and responsibilities across urban, rural and island authorities.

The Board:

- i. Noted the publication of the Scottish Government National Transport Strategy;
- ii. Noted the update on Transport Governance; and
- iii. Agreed the proposed COSLA position set out in paragraphs 16 – 18. Members also agreed to amend a section of paragraph 18 to "*enabling* continued political buy-in from Elected Members through the Environment and Economy Board".

8. Transforming the Business Support Environment (paper)

The report provided an update on the development and implications of the Single Entry Point (SEP), Target Operating Model (TOM), and other initiatives which have emerged from the Enterprise and Skills Review, on the development and delivery of business support in Scotland.

The Board:

- i. Considered the issues raised;
- ii. Considered the implications for Local Government in the business support space; and
- iii. Considered and comment on the principles and scope of the proposed review of place-based business support

9. 'Connecting People and Places – A Policy Statement on Rangering in Scotland' (paper)

This report provided the Board with an opportunity to offer comments and views on SNH's revised policy statement on countryside rangers and agree that COSLA should formally endorse the document prior to its launch.

Members recognised that the aspirations of the statement are laudable and agreed that it offers a fantastic opportunity to raise awareness of the role of Countryside Rangers. Several changes were agreed by the Board as part of the discussion.

Members stressed that COSLA should continue raising awareness of the role of rangers especially in relation to education and climate change and within the broader context of workforce constraints in local authorities. Officers committed to working with SNH colleagues to ensure that these views were reflected in the document and the statement would be revised following the Board's feedback.

The Board:

- i. Provided any comments on the draft policy statement;
- ii. Agreed that COSLA endorse the draft statement subject to any amendments; and
- iii. Agreed that Cllr Steven Heddle, on behalf of the Board, sign off the final version of the statement prior to publication in Spring 2020.

Private Session

10. Green Growth Accelerator (paper)

The 2019/20 Programme for Government announced that the Scottish Government would bring forward a Green Growth Accelerator (GGA) to “unlock additional resource for emissions-reducing investment”. The paper outlined issues which had emerged from the growth accelerator approach generally and sought agreement from the Board for officers to continue discussions with the Scottish Government on the development of the GGA.

The Board:

- i. Noted that COSLA officers had had initial discussions with the Scottish Government on the development of a Green Growth Accelerator;

- ii. Noted that, at this stage, there was very little detail on how the scheme would operate and that more discussion would be required with the Scottish Government;
- iii. Agreed the proposed COSLA position at paragraph 11-12 in the paper.

11. Planning Performance and Fees Consultation (paper)

This report presented COSLA's response to the Scottish Government consultation on Planning Performance and Fees for discussion and approval. The consultation was launched in December 2019 and formed a key part of the programme for implementing the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.

The Board:

- i. Agreed COSLA's response at Appendix A in the paper subject to any comments made during the meeting.

12. Remote and Rural Members Bill

Gail Ross MSP has consulted on a proposed Remote Rural Communities Bill, which built on some of the themes raised by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2019. The paper provided Members with an opportunity to discuss the themes of the proposed Bill, as well as potential implications for Local Government.

The Board:

- i. Discussed the potential implications of the proposed Remote Rural Communities Bill;
- ii. Provided early political soundings on proposed content of the Bill to inform COSLA's engagement with the process; and
- iii. Agreed the proposed COSLA position at paragraphs 9-11 in the paper.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Friday, 17 April 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting finished at 1310hrs.