

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</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>	2021 as 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.	
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Priority 6: Transport

Activity	Current Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status
Final stages of the development of the National Transport Strategy (NTS) and implementation of the key sections of the Transport Act.	<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>	We will update the Board when we have more information on key future milestones.	We want a strategy that adds value and clearly shows it will improve outcomes. Specifically, it needs to support other/wider policy aims, including	Normal work on transport policy has been suspended.

Lead: Elisa and John	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.		climate change targets, planning reform and genuinely sustainable economic development.	
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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</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>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>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.</p>

	<p>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>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>31 December 2023 maximum deadline to spend current EU allocations and for any UK replacement funds to kick in.</p>		
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				UN being developed. Discussions with UK Government on Local Government element of COP26 official programme.
Priority 8: Waste				
Activity	Current Update	Key Milestones	Outcome Description	Status
Development of the Scottish Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), monitoring of 2021 Biodegradable Landfill Ban, policy on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Lead: Silke	COSLA's normal work on waste policy has been suspended to allow for work on the Covid-19 response. See agenda item 7	We will update the Board when we have more information on key future milestones.	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 medium to longer term. We want to influence positively the	Normal work on waste policy has been suspended.

			<p>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> <p>We want Local Authorities to be an active part in developing Scotland's waste/circular</p>	
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			economy policy and to be well resourced to play a leading role.	
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COSLA Officers				
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* Percentage allocation to the Environment and Economy team

