



Convention Item 02

## MINUTE OF MEETING OF COSLA CONVENTION

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 11am

Verity House, 19 Haymarket Yards, Edinburgh and Via MS Teams

### **Present**

Aberdeen City	Cllr Emma Farquhar (Sub)
Aberdeen City	Cllr Miranda Radley
Aberdeen City	Cllr Alex Nicoll
Aberdeen City	Cllr Sandra Macdonald
Aberdeen City	Cllr Ian Yuill
Aberdeenshire	Jim Savage
Aberdeenshire	Cllr Alison Evison
Aberdeenshire	Cllr Mark Findlater
Aberdeenshire	Cllr Ross Cassie
Aberdeenshire	Cllr John Cox
Aberdeenshire	Cllr Gwyneth Petrie
Aberdeenshire	Cllr Anne Stirling
Angus	Mark Armstrong (Sub)
Angus	Cllr Kenny Braes
Angus	Cllr Bill Duff
Angus	Cllr Beth Whiteside
Angus	Cllr Craig Fortheringham (Sub)
Argyll and Bute	Pippa Milne
Argyll and Bute	Cllr Jim Lynch
Argyll and Bute	Cllr Robin Currie
Argyll and Bute	Cllr Daniel Hampsey
City of Edinburgh	Andrew Kerr
City of Edinburgh	Cllr Cammy Day
City of Edinburgh	Cllr Lesley MacInnes
City of Edinburgh	Cllr Adam McVey
City of Edinburgh	Cllr Iain Whyte
City of Edinburgh	Cllr Lewis Younie (Sub)
City of Edinburgh	Cllr Claire Miller
Clackmannanshire	Nikki Bridle
Clackmannanshire	Cllr Ellen Forson

Clackmannanshire	Cllr Denis Coyne (Sub)
Clackmannanshire	Cllr Kenneth Earle
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Malcom Burr
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Cllr Paul Steele
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Cllr Kenneth Macleod
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Cllr Duncan MacInnes
Dumfries and Galloway	Lorna Meahan (Sub)
Dumfries and Galloway	Cllr Stephen Thompson
Dumfries and Galloway	Cllr Linda Dorward
Dumfries and Galloway	Cllr Gail Macgregor
Dumfries and Galloway	Cllr Paula Stevenson (Sub)
Dundee City	Gregory Colgan
Dundee City	Cllr Willie Sawers (Sub)
Dundee City	Cllr John Alexander (Sub)
Dundee City	Cllr Steven Rome
Dundee City	Cllr Kevin Keenan
Dundee City	Cllr Craig Duncan
East Ayrshire	Eddie Fraser
East Ayrshire	Cllr Douglas Reid
East Ayrshire	Cllr Jim McMahan
East Ayrshire	Cllr Maureen McKay
East Ayrshire	Cllr Neill Watts (Sub)
East Dunbartonshire	Gerry Cornes
East Dunbartonshire	Cllr Gordan Low
East Dunbartonshire	Cllr Colette McDiarmid (Sub)
East Dunbartonshire	Cllr Vaughan Moody
East Lothian	Monica Patterson
East Lothian	Cllr Norman Hampshire
East Lothian	Cllr Lyn Jardine
East Lothian	Cllr Lachlan Bruce
East Renfrewshire	Lorraine McMillan
East Renfrewshire	Cllr Own O'Donnell
East Renfrewshire	Cllr Tony Buchanan
East Renfrewshire	Cllr Gordon Wallace
Falkirk	Kenneth Lawrie
Falkirk	Cllr Cecil Meiklejohn
Falkirk	Cllr Paul Garner
Falkirk	Cllr Anne Hannah
Falkirk	Cllr James Bundy
Fife	Eileen Rowand (Sub)
Fife	Cllr David Ross
Fife	Cllr Brian Goodall
Fife	Cllr Lesley Blackhouse
Fife	Cllr Rosemary Liewald
Fife	Cllr Kathleen Leslie
Fife	Cllr Alan Knox
Glasgow City	Cllr Susan Aitken
Glasgow City	Cllr Roza Salih
Glasgow City	Cllr Fyeza Ikhtlaq
Glasgow City	Cllr George Redmond

Glasgow City	Cllr Soryia Siddique
Glasgow City	Cllr Jon Molyneux
Highland	Donna Manson
Highland	Cllr Raymond Bremmer
Highland	Cllr Ken Gowans
Highland	Cllr Bill Lobban
Highland	Cllr John Finlayson
Highland	Cllr Alasdair Christie
Inverclyde	Louise Long
Inverclyde	Cllr Stephen McCabe
Inverclyde	Cllr Elizabeth Robertson
Inverclyde	Cllr Martin McCluskey (Sub)
Midlothian	Dr Grace Vickers
Midlothian	Cllr Kelly Parry
Midlothian	Cllr Russell Imrie
Midlothian	Cllr David Virgo
Moray	Roderick Burns
Moray	Cllr Shona Morrison
Moray	Cllr Neil McLennan
Moray	Cllr Marc Macrae (Sub)
Moray	Cllr Graham Leadbitter
North Ayrshire	Craig Hatton
North Ayrshire	Cllr Marie Burns
North Ayrshire	Cllr Shaun Macaulay
North Ayrshire	Cllr Joe Cullinane
North Lanarkshire	Des Murry
North Lanarkshire	Cllr Heather Brannen-McVey
North Lanarkshire	Cllr Jordan Linden
North Lanarkshire	Cllr Tracy Carragher
North Lanarkshire	Cllr Alan Stubbs
North Lanarkshire	Cllr Kirsten Larson
North Lanarkshire	Cllr Paul Kelly (Sub)
North Lanarkshire	Cllr Angela Campbell
Orkney Islands	Karen Greaves (Sub)
Orkney Islands	Cllr James Stockan
Orkney Islands	Cllr Heather Woodbridge
Orkney Islands	Cllr Steven Heddle
Perth and Kinross	Karen Donaldson (Sub)
Perth and Kinross	Cllr Grant Laing
Perth and Kinross	Cllr Eric Drysdale
Perth and Kinross	Cllr John Duff
Perth and Kinross	Cllr Peter Barrett
Renfrewshire	Alan Russell
Renfrewshire	Cllr Ian Nicholson
Renfrewshire	Cllr Jacqueline Cameron
Renfrewshire	Cllr Jim Paterson (Sub)
Renfrewshire	Cllr Iain McMillan
Renfrewshire	Cllr Neill Graham
Scottish Borders	Cllr Euan Jardine
Scottish Borders	Cllr Donald Moffat (Sub)

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Cllr Scott Hamilton  
Cllr David Parker (and Clive)  
Peter Peterson (Sub)  
Cllr Gary Robinson (Sub)  
Cllr Andrea Manson  
Cllr Davie Sandison  
Eileen Howat  
Cllr Peter Henderson  
Cllr Brian McGinley  
Cllr Brian Connolly  
Cleland Sneddon  
Cllr Joe Fagan  
Cllr John Ross  
Cllr Maureen Chalmers  
Cllr Katy Loudon  
Cllr Gerry Convery  
Cllr Alex Alison  
Carol Beattie  
Cllr Graham Houston  
Cllr Chris Kane  
Cllr Scott Farmer  
Cllr Neil Benny  
Peter Hessel  
Joyce White  
Cllr Karen Conaghan  
Cllr Clare Steel  
Cllr Lawrence O'Neill  
Graham Hope  
Cllr Lawrence Fitzpatrick  
Cllr Janet Campbell  
Cllr Kirsteen Sullivan  
Cllr Damian Doran-Timson

### **Apologies**

Aberdeen City  
Aberdeen City  
Angus  
Angus  
City of Edinburgh  
Clackmannanshire  
Dumfries and Galloway  
Dumfries and Galloway  
Dundee City  
Dundee City  
East Ayrshire  
East Dunbartonshire  
Fife  
Glasgow City  
Glasgow City

Angela Scott  
Cllr Ryan Houghton\*  
Margo Williamson\*  
Cllr Derek Wann\*  
Cllr Kevin Lang\*  
Cllr Martha Benny\*  
Derek Crichton\*  
Cllr Richard Brodie\*  
Cllr Heather Anderson\*  
Cllr Ken Lynn\*  
Cllr John McFadzean\*  
Cllr Alan Moir\*  
Steve Grimmond\*  
Annemarie O'Donnell  
Cllr Kieran Turner

Glasgow City  
Inverclyde  
Moray  
North Ayrshire  
North Lanarkshire  
Orkney Islands  
Perth and Kinross  
Renfrewshire  
Scottish Borders  
Scottish Borders  
Shetland Islands  
Shetland Islands

Cllr Blair Anderson  
Cllr Natasha McGuire\*  
Cllr Kathleen Robertson\*  
Cllr Tom Marshall  
Cllr Andrew Duffy-Lawson\*  
John Mundell\*  
Thomas Glen\*  
Cllr John Shaw\*  
Netta Meadows  
Cllr Elaine Thornton-Nicol\*  
Maggie Sandison\*  
Cllr Emma Macdonald\*

\*Denotes a Substitute

## **Public Session**

### **1. Introduction from COSLA Vice President**

Councillor Graham Houston, COSLA's current Vice President, welcomed all Members to the first Convention for the new COSLA Presidential Team and Spokespersons, soon to be elected. The Vice President provided advice on how to participate in the meeting in a hybrid setting. Apologies and substitutes were noted separately for the minute.

Councillor Houston handed over to COSLA's Chief Executive, Sally Loudon, who chaired Convention through the election of the new COSLA President and Vice President.

### **2. Election of President**

The Convention received a report which informed Members of the nominations received for the post of COSLA President.

Ahead of the vote for the COSLA President, the meeting was informed that due to the number of attendees at this meeting of Convention the number of votes eligible to be cast were 131 (in room and online).

The COSLA Chief Executive advised that Councillors Tony Buchanan, Paul Kelly, Gail Macgregor and Andrew Polson had withdrawn their nominations for the Presidency and therefore the nominations were as follows:

- Cllr Heather Brannan-McVey
- Cllr Alison Evison
- Cllr Steven Heddle
- Cllr Shona Morrison

Following an electronic secret ballot, it was announced that the vote was as follows:

- Cllr Heather Brannan-McVey – 62
- Cllr Alison Evison – 3
- Cllr Steven Heddle – 0
- Cllr Shona Morrison – 66

- No Vote - 0

The COSLA Chief Executive advised that Councillor Shona Morrison had been duly elected as the new President of COSLA.

Convention thanked Councillor Alison Evison for all her work as the COSLA President for the past five years.

The newly elected President was invited to the top table and then took over as Chair of the meeting.

A recess of the meeting was called at 11.20am and reconvened at 11.30am.

### **3. Election of Vice-President**

The Convention received a report which informed Members of the nominations received for the post of COSLA Vice-President.

The COSLA President Councillor Shona Morrison advised that Councillors Tony Buchanan, Gail Macgregor, and Andrew Polson had all withdrawn their nominations for the Vice Presidency. As a result of Councillor Shona Morrison being elected President, her nomination was automatically withdrawn and as a result of the gender rules Councillor Heather Brannan-McVey could no longer be considered for election. Therefore, the nominations were as follows:

- Cllr Peter Barrett
- Cllr Steven Heddle
- Cllr Paul Kelly

Following an electronic secret ballot, it was announced that the vote was as follows:

- Cllr Peter Barrett – 54
- Cllr Steven Heddle – 69
- Cllr Paul Kelly – 3
- No Vote - 5

The COSLA Chief Executive advised that Councillor Steven Heddle had been duly elected as the new COSLA Vice President.

Convention thanked Councillor Graham Houston for all his work as the COSLA Vice-President for the past five years.

The new COSLA President and Vice-President thanked Members for voting them into their respective posts.

A recess of the meeting was called at 12pm and reconvened at 12.30pm.

### **4. Presentation on COSLA by Chief Executive**

The Convention received a PowerPoint presentation from the COSLA Chief Executive providing an overview of COSLA, governance arrangements, and the role and remit of the Convention.

The Convention noted the content of the presentation.

## **5. Job Descriptions of Office Bearers**

The Convention was provided with a report which invited agreement on the job descriptions for all COSLA Office Bearers.

The Convention agreed the job descriptions for President, Vice President, and Spokespersons as outlined at Appendix A of the report.

## **6. Appointment of Spokespersons**

The Convention received a report which invited Members to agree the apportionment of Spokespersons' roles based on political group numbers within the Convention and agree the appointment of candidates put forward by political groups on that basis. The recommendation was proposed and seconded collectively by COSLA Political Group Leaders.

Accordingly, Convention:

- i. Noted the appointment of Spokespersons' roles as outlined at paragraph 6 of the report; and
- ii. Agreed the appointment of Spokespersons (as recommended by COSLA Political Group Leaders), as below:
  - Resources – Cllr Katie Hagmann (Dumfries and Galloway, SNP);
  - Health and Social Care – Cllr Paul Kelly (North Lanarkshire, Labour);
  - Children and Young People – Cllr Tony Buchanan (East Renfrewshire, SNP);
  - Environment and Economy – Cllr Gail Macgregor (Dumfries and Galloway, Conservative); and
  - Community Wellbeing – Cllr Maureen Chalmers (South Lanarkshire, SNP).

## **7. Appointments to Outside Bodies**

The Convention considered a report which outlined appointments required to be made by COSLA at the start of a new Council term to outside, employer, and other bodies.

In relation to Recommendation **viii a**. Convention was informed that there was a change to the number of vacancies to be filled on the Scottish Teachers Pension Scheme Advisory Board, following an update earlier in the week from the Scottish Public Pensions Agency. SPPA had advised that there were five vacancies to be filled, rather than six as previously stated.

Convention delegates were also informed of an additional recommendation required as **viii d**.:

*In addition to the five spaces to be filled on the Teachers' Pension Scheme Advisory Board, there are three posts to be filled on the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board. There are five Elected Member posts on this Board, but two are already filled, as noted in paragraph 51 of the report.*

An Amendment to the recommendations was proposed by Councillor Douglas Reid and seconded by Councillor David Ross. This was agreed unanimously.

Accordingly, Convention:

- i. Agreed that for various international bodies (as paragraphs 2—13) the following places be filled on the basis of political consensus between COSLA Political Group Leaders, achieving gender balance where needed:
  - a. Agreed the following places at the Council of European Regions and Municipalities Policy Committee – Cllr Gary Robinson (full member), Cllr Gail Macgregor (alternative member), and Cllr Peter Barrett (alternative for WLGA member);
  - b. Agreed the COSLA delegate on the UCLG World Council be the President, and agreed the alternative as Vice President;
  - c. Agreed that the practice continues of selecting representation as appropriate to the particular meeting of the EU Committee of the Regions UK Contact Forum from the Presidential Team or Spokespersons;
- ii. Agreed that Councillor Jacqueline Cameron and Councillor Julie Bell continue their positions representing COSLA on the Public Health Scotland Board (as paragraphs 14-15);
- iii. Agreed that the COSLA positions on the Improvement Service Board be filled by the President, Cllr Ellen Forson, Cllr Neil Benny, and a representative of the Labour Group to be confirmed following the meeting (as paragraphs 16-19);
- iv. Agreed the proposed size and political make-up of the TSS Board (as paragraphs 22-25) and to authorise COSLA Political Group Leaders to make the necessary appointments by the end of July;
- v. Agreed the proposed size and political make-up of the Business Gateway Boars (as paragraphs 28-30) and to authorise COSLA Political Group Leaders to make the necessary appointments by the end of July;
- vi. Agreed the Councillors to represent employer interests on the negotiation bodies that agree our employees pay and conditions as follows – encourage as soon as possible the nomination of one Councillor from each Council to join the Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees (SJC), authorise COSLA Political Group Leaders to identify twelve Councillors for the SJC steering group and agree the following eight Councillors for the Scottish Negotiation Committee for Teachers (as paragraphs 32-36) – Cllr John Finlayson; Cllr Anne Stirling; Cllr Stephen McCabe; Cllr Angela Campbell; Cllr David Virgo; Cllr Daniel Hampsey; and two representatives of the SNP Group to be confirmed after the meeting;
- vii. Agreed that if there is a need for a Chief Officials or Craft Operatives committee meeting COSLA officers should seek Councillors from those Members representing Councils on the full SJC (as paragraphs 37-39);
- viii. Agreed that, in terms of vacancies on the Scottish Public Pension Agency Pension Boards (as paragraphs 40-57):
  - a. Agreed the proposed process and timeline for filling two vacancies on the Scottish Teachers' Pension Board and the five vacancies on the Scheme Advisory Board;
  - b. Agreed that the call for prospective nominees should include Council Officers with experience of pensions, as well as Elected Members, for the positions on the Scheme Advisory Board in particular;
  - c. Agreed that any future vacancies on both Boards be filled in line with the processes above and that to achieve this, COSLA Officers will work under



the direction of COSLA's Resource Spokesperson and alongside SPPA's Governance Officers, seeking nominations from Councils as required; and

- d. Agreed that the three vacant COSLA Elected Member representatives on the Scottish Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board, taking account of the considerations set out in the paper's paragraphs, 46-51, be filled by nominations from Political Group Leaders by mid-July.

*N.B. [Appointments were made post-meeting as agreed above, and further details are available on request from COSLA officers]*

## **8. Appointments to COSLA Audit Group**

The Convention received a report which invited Members to agree the proposed size and political make-up of the Audit Group, as its membership needed reviewing along with appointments to the Group.

The COSLA Constitution stated that "*Convention shall determine the delegated powers, size, and political composition of all the Association's governance structures.*" Section 5 of the Scheme of Delegation, provided as part of the report, gave further specific detail relating to the Audit Group.

Convention was informed that based on the experience in the last Local Government term and on the new political make-up of COSLA, proposals had been presented within the paper of a suggested size and political make-up of the Group.

Convention was asked to authorise COSLA Political Group Leaders to make the appointments by the end of June, allowing the Group to meet, elect a Chair, and start its work. Importantly, this included presenting a report to Convention in October on the previous year's audited COSLA Accounts.

Convention:

- i. Agreed the proposed size and political make-up of the Audit Group; and
- ii. Authorised the COSLA Political Group Leaders to make the necessary appointments by the end of June.

## **9. Draft Minute of Previous Meeting of Convention on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

The minute of the Convention Meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 was agreed as an accurate record.

## **10. COSLA's Strategic Context and Priorities for the New COSLA Plan (2022-2027)**

The Convention received a report on the framework for a refreshed COSLA Plan agreed at COSLA Convention on 25 February 2022. The Plan was based on the "Blueprint for Local Government" developed during COVID and the intention was that further detail would be brought to COSLA Convention in October 2022 for approval.

However, since then, there had been many changes to the strategic context:

- Russia had invaded Ukraine, with serious implications for the rest of the world;

- Currently in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis;
- Soaring inflation and energy prices, impacting individuals, families, and councils;
- A new National Strategy for Economic Transformation had been published, and concerns had been raised about COSLA and Local Government's role in relation to governance arrangements;
- Uncertainty around the National Care Service, with legislation to follow shortly; and
- Scottish Government had published its spending plans for the rest of the parliamentary term, which showed a "flat-lining" of core Local Government revenue for the next three years.

Given the changes, the paper provided Convention with an updated summary of the current strategic context for Local Government and an overview of the types of new issues that should be included under each of the six Blueprint themes. With agreement from Convention, COSLA would commence work immediately on the new Plan and it would be brought to Convention in October for approval.

Convention:

- Provided comments on the strategic context and key priorities for COSLA; and
- Agreed that a refreshed COSLA Plan be brought to Convention for agreement in October 2022 using the Blueprint themes as its basis.

## **11. European Charter of Local Self-Government - Update**

The Convention received an update on the European Charter of Local Self-Government, following on from the update received during COSLA Convention on 25 February 2022.

The previous COSLA President had met with Mark Ruskell MSP, the Parliamentary lead on this Bill, and been assured of his support for early progress. Particularly, he assured the then President that he too was pressing Scottish Government to bring forward the required changes as soon as practicable.

Progress remained incremental, so Convention in February, had requested a further update to be presented at this meeting of Convention. Significantly, on 24 May 2022, the Deputy First Minister, John Swinney, had delivered a Ministerial Statement to the Scottish Parliament regarding both the European Charter on Local Self-Government and the UNCRC incorporation Bills. The paper listed the salient points made in Mr Swinney's statement.

Convention members asked that the new Presidential Team press for a prioritisation of the changes required in order to resolve the UK Supreme Court issues on competency, so that the Bill could be passed and established in Scots Law as soon as possible. Similarly, an update on the UNCRC Children's Rights and Protection Bill should be expedited as per the recommendations below.

Convention:

- Agreed that COSLA continue to engage with the Scottish Government and press for the development of suitable amendments required by the Supreme Court that could be made to both the European Charter and UNCRC Bills so that they could be formally enacted; and
- Agreed that a further report be provided at the next meeting of Convention.

**Close**

Councillor Morrison concluded the meeting of COSLA Convention at 1pm. The new COSLA President thanked Members for their attendance and expressed her enthusiasm and excitement to work with COSLA Convention Members over the next five years.

The next meeting of COSLA Convention was Friday 28 October 2022.