

AYRSHIRE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 1400 HRS BY VIDEO CONFERENCE

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING: Councillor Joe Cullinane, North Ayrshire Council; Euan Baird, Senior Policy Officer, Scottish Government; Councillor Siobhan Brown, South Ayrshire Council; Councillor Marie Burns, North Ayrshire Council; Councillor Brian Connolly, South Ayrshire Council; Councillor Tom Cook, East Ayrshire Council; Douglas Cowan, Area Manager, Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Alastair Dobson, Managing Director, Taste of Arran; Simon Foster, Director of Engineering, Spirit Aerosystems; Councillor Alex Gallagher, North Ayrshire Council; Donald Gillies, Director - Place, South Ayrshire Council; Andrea Glass, Regional Skills Planning Lead (South West Scotland and Forth Valley), Skills Development Scotland; Craig Hatton, Chief Executive, North Ayrshire Council; Councillor Peter Henderson, South Ayrshire Council; Eileen Howat, Chief Executive, South Ayrshire Council; Fiona Lees, Chief Executive, East Ayrshire Council; Hisashi Kuboyama, Development Manager (West of Scotland), Federation of Small Businesses; Councillor John McGhee, East Ayrshire Council; Alan McGregor, Professor of Economic Development, University of Glasgow; Alex McPhee, Depute Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer: Economy and Skills, East Ayrshire Council; Mark Newlands, Head of Partnerships, Scottish Enterprise; Councillor Douglas Reid, East Ayrshire Council; Marcus Ross, Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Development/Marketing, Recruitment and Engagement, University of West of Scotland; Malcolm Roughead, Visit Scotland; Val Russell, Chief Executive Officer, Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce; Carol Turnbull, Principal, Ayrshire College; and Karen Yeomans, Executive Director, Economy and Communities, North Ayrshire Council.

OFFICERS PARTICIPATING: Allison Craig, Programme Manager, Ayrshire Growth Deal, South Ayrshire Council; Theo Leijser, Service Lead - Economy and Regeneration, South Ayrshire Council; Caitriona McAuley, Head of Economic Growth, North Ayrshire Council; David McDowall, Interim Head of Planning and Economic Development, East Ayrshire Council; James Miller, Senior Planning Services Manager, North Ayrshire Council; and Julie Nicol, Service Lead, Planning and Building Standards, South Ayrshire Council.

PARTICIPATING: Gillian Hamilton, Democratic Services Officer, East Ayrshire Council.

APOLOGIES: Katie Hutton, Director of National Training Programmes, Skills Development Scotland; Alison Irvine, Director of Transport, Strategy and Analysis, Transport Scotland; Craig Mahoney, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, University of West of Scotland and Milan Radosavljevic, Vice-Principal, Research, Innovation and Engagement, University of West of Scotland.

CHAIR: Councillor Joe Cullinane, North Ayrshire Council.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

1. The Board agreed to pass the following Resolution:- “That under Section 50A(3A) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the Press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that if

members of the public were present, there would be a real and substantial risk to public health due to infection or contamination with coronavirus”.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

2. It was agreed, subject to approval of the Joint Committee, to appoint Councillor Peter Henderson, South Ayrshire Council as Chair of the Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board from the date of the next meeting up until September 2021.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3. There were submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to an amendment to reflect apologies from Councillor Marie Burns, North Ayrshire Council and Hisashi Kuboyama, Development Manager (West of Scotland), Federation of Small Businesses, the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 June 2020 (circulated).

MATTER ARISING

- 3.1 It was noted that progress was being made by the Executive Group under the governance arrangements established to oversee the development of an economic recovery plan, as part of our economic strategy, in response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the economy. A detailed report on proposals for business support would come forward from the Executive Group to the next meeting of the Partnership Board.

AYRSHIRE GROWTH DEAL - PROGRAMME UPDATE

4. There was submitted a report (circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer: Economy and Skills, East Ayrshire Council which advised on the progress of the Ayrshire Growth Deal and the development of its component projects as at 24 August 2020 and set out the principal Ayrshire Growth Deal package of documents for consideration and agreement by the Joint Committee prior to formal joint sign off by the three Councils and by the UK and Scottish Governments. The report also provided the draft spend profile for the Deal over its lifetime. This was a draft estimate based on current activities and implementation plans and would be subject to review as Outline Business Cases (OBCs) were finalised. This profile would also be subject to negotiation with both the UK and Scottish Governments and would form a key part of the Deal documents which would require to be signed prior to full Deal implementation.

Arising from discussion it was noted:-

- that a minor textual amendment required to be made to the Deal Document, as highlighted at the meeting;
- that each project had its own risk register (including mitigations), subject to regular review and update. A programme risk register was also being maintained by the PMO and would be reported to each Partnership Board and Joint Committee meeting. It was confirmed that the key strategic risk related to the potential consequences of the final decision on Brexit was receiving attention;
- that planning was underway to support arrangements for the (virtual) Deal Document Signing Event in September 2020 and to reach a wider audience; and

- to note that substantial work was being carried out on project interdependencies and alignment strategies.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the updates provided in the report;
- (ii) to note the progress across the Ayrshire Growth Deal Programme;
- (iii) to note the key elements of work that should be concluded prior to Growth Deal implementation;
- (iv) to note the tentative date of late September 2020 for signing of the Ayrshire Growth Deal and that both UK and Scottish Governments remained fully committed to the growth deals programme across Scotland;
- (v) to note the Agreement between East, North and South Ayrshire Councils;
- (vi) to note the Ayrshire Growth Deal Communications Action Plan for 2020/21;
- (vii) to note the progress with the design and development of an Ayrshire Growth Deal website; and
- (viii) otherwise to note the report.

INDICATIVE AYRSHIRE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

5. There was submitted a report (circulated) by the Service Lead (Planning and Building Standards), South Ayrshire Council on behalf of the Chief Executives of South, East and North Ayrshire Councils which advised on the requirement for and progress made on the preparation of a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for Ayrshire.

Arising from discussion it was noted:-

- that the Community Wealth Building aspect of the iARSS was welcomed;
- that the AGD investment was expected to unlock around £300m of private investment and 7,000 new jobs across a wide range of sectors and, in doing so, transform the local economy for the benefit of all our people and places;
- that the iARSS had been reported to East and North Ayrshire Councils in advance of submission to the Scottish Government and South Ayrshire Council would consider the iARSS on 15 September 2020; and
- that the iARSS was well presented and readable. This was important for community understanding and investment in the iARSS, particularly given the emphasis on Community Wealth Building and, would be reflected in communications going forward.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the requirement to prepare a Regional Spatial Strategy;
- (ii) to note the contents of the Indicative Ayrshire Regional Spatial Strategy appended to the report; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the report.

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

6. There was submitted a report (circulated) by the Chief Executive, North Ayrshire Council, which provided an update on Community Wealth Building in Ayrshire and confirmed the participation of East Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Council

representatives in the Community Wealth Building Commission. The link to the North Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Strategy is here:- <https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/Documents/nac-cwb-strategy-brochure.pdf>

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the update on Community Wealth Building in Ayrshire;
- (ii) to note that work was currently underway to explore the need for a Community Bank based on a cooperative model, potentially at a West of Scotland level. It was confirmed that consideration would be given to any opportunity to engage the Credit Union in this workstream;
- (iii) to receive a further report on the Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter at the next meeting of the Partnership Board; and
- (iv) otherwise to note the report.

AYRSHIRE REGIONAL AEROSPACE AND SPACE GROUP (ARASG)

7. There was submitted a report (circulated) by the Lead of the Regional Aerospace/ Space Group which provided an update on progress made by the Ayrshire Regional Aerospace and Space Group (ARASG).

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the progress made with establishing the ARASG;
- (ii) to endorse the approach set out by the ARASG to supporting the aerospace sector;
- (iii) to note the opportunity to establish an aircraft decommissioning centre of excellence at Prestwick Airport and the related challenges around funding for enabling infrastructure, all as detailed in the report and appendices. The ARASG would seek further clarification on funding and continue to develop the detailed business case should funding be available; and
- (iii) otherwise to note report.

REGIONAL VISITOR ECONOMY

8. There was submitted a report (circulated) by the Chair of the Regional Visitor Economy Group, which provided an update on the work of the Regional Visitor Economy Group and next actions.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the formation of the Regional Visitor Economy Group and its identified priorities and workstreams around Marketing, Digital (in particular the need to develop online booking capacity); Product/Experiences, Destination Management Organisation and Skills;
- (ii) to support the establishment of an Ayrshire Destination Management Organisation (DMO) in principle and that further work be undertaken to develop a business case for consideration at the next meeting of the Partnership Board;
- (iii) to note the issue highlighted at the meeting around the increase in motor homes/camping in South Ayrshire and the associated lack of

infrastructure/facilities. The Scottish Government proposed to review this window of opportunity from a strategic perspective; and

- (iv) otherwise to note the report.

FREEPORTS

9. There was submitted a report (circulated) by the Chief Executive, North Ayrshire Council which provided an update on developments regarding the establishment of Freeports in the UK, including the Ayrshire Regional Economic Partnership's response to the recent UK Government Department for International Trade consultation on Freeports.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the consultation response appended to the report;
- (ii) that officers engage with officials in both the UK and Scottish Governments to influence the development of Freeport policy;
- (iii) to note the general reservations expressed at the meeting in relation to Freeports and to receive an update on progress with (ii) above at the next meeting of the Partnership Board; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the report.

COVID-19: AYRSHIRE'S FOOD AND DRINK SECTOR - FROM EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO RECOVERY AND RENEWAL

10. There was submitted a report (circulated) by the Lead of the Food and Drink Sector Group which analysed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Ayrshire's food and drink sector and set out the steps which now required to be taken in partnership to support its recovery and renewal, ensuring that this represented a key component of our wider economic ambitions for Ayrshire.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the economic impact of Covid-19 on Ayrshire's food and drink industry, one of our key sectors;
- (ii) to note the efforts made by the three Councils and other stakeholders, working in partnership to protect and support our food and drink businesses as part of our emergency response;
- (iii) to note the partnership working opportunity with Scotland Food and Drink, Scottish Government and the associated funding requirements in respect of the two proposed Food Tourism Co-ordinator posts which would be considered by each Council to authorise the £6,666 match funding for the 1 year appointment;
- (iv) to note the steps being taken in partnership to support the longer-term recovery and renewal of this sector via the establishment of a Food and Drink Sector Support Group; and
- (v) otherwise to note the report.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON LABOUR MARKET AND SKILLS (AYRSHIRE)

11. There was submitted a joint report dated September 2020 (circulated) by the Regional Skills Planning Lead, Skills Development Scotland, Vice-Principal Curriculum and

Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Development/Marketing, Recruitment and Engagement, University of West of Scotland which highlighted the impact of Covid-19 on the labour market and skills and identified the steps needed to support recovery and renewal within the context of the wider economic ambitions for Ayrshire.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the impact of Covid-19 on the labour market and skills (Ayrshire) and to support the next steps in the report towards an immediate response and short to medium term Regional Skills Investment Plan (RSIP);
- (ii) to note the governance and monitoring role of the Executive Group in relation to this activity;
- (iii) to note that the Head of Economic Growth, North Ayrshire Council would share their “Recovery and Renewal” approach with SDS;
- (iv) to note that a longer-term strategy should also be considered; and
- (v) otherwise to note the report.

DRAFT MEETINGS CALENDAR

- 12.** It was agreed that future meetings of the Partnership Board would be held as follows:-

Friday, 29 January 2021 at 1400 hours;
Thursday, 29 April 2021 at 1400 hours;
Thursday, 19 August 2021 at 1400 hours; and
Thursday, 4 November 2021 at 1400 hours.

The meeting terminated at 1558 hrs.