

## Minutes of ESEC Policy Board, 22 August 2017

9.30-13.30, Tuesday 22 August 2017

Discovery Point, Dundee, DD1 3XA

Present:	Laura Paterson	Aberdeen City Council
	Cllr John Reynolds	Aberdeen City Council
	Shelley Hague	Angus Council
	Cllr Ben Lawrie	Angus Council
	Rhonda McFarlane	Angus Council
	Shelley Hague	Angus Council
	Cllr Will Dawson	Dundee City Council
	Diane Milne	Dundee City Council
	Joanne Scobie	ESEC Secretariat
	Andrew Wilson	Falkirk Council
	Cllr Peter Barrett	Perth and Kinross Council
	Serge Merone	Perth and Kinross Council
	Cllr Scott Farmer	Stirling Council
	Rickard Eksten	Scotland Europa
Apologies:	Stuart Bews	Aberdeen City Council
	Victoria Gibbons	Angus Council
	Rory Young	Dundee City Council
	Matthew Farrell	Falkirk Council
	Cllr Altany Craik	Fife Council
	Sharon Douglas	Fife Council
	Steve Docherty	Stirling Council

### Welcome and introductions

- ESEC chair Cllr Ben Lawrie welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that the board now composed of 6 out of 7 new councillors, with only Cllr Dawson returning from the previous term.

### Apologies for absence

- Apologies were listed as above.

### Election of Office Bearers

- Cllr Will Dawson and Cllr Joh Reynolds were nominated and elected as the two ESEC vice-chairs.

### Approval of draft minutes of Policy Board 3 March 2017

- The minutes of 3 March, during which Minister Kevin Stewart presented to the board, were

agreed as an accurate reflection of discussion.

### **Overview of ESEC – activities and objectives**

- Joanne Scobie, the ESEC EU Officer (Policy and Partnerships), gave a presentation on ESEC's activities and agreed objectives.
- The presentation explained the role of the policy Board, the role of the officer Group, an overview of activity (including responses to consultations and an event in the Scottish Parliament), and overview of EU funding, and ESEC's position on Brexit.
- Please see the email sent on 25 September for the presentation.

### **Scotland Europa – presentation for ESEC board**

- Rickard Eksten gave a presentation on the role of Scotland Europa and its long-standing relationship with ESEC, including examples of recent collaboration. He also provided an overview of the Brexit process from the Brussels perspective.
- Scotland Europa holds two members meetings per year and all ESEC board members and officers are encouraged to attend. The next one will be in Stirling on 7 September.
- There will be an EU Collaboration and Innovation event on 29 September. Members are invited to submit EU funding case studies and to attend on the day.
- Please see the email sent on 25 September for the presentation.

### **Membership update – response to Brexit**

- Members were invited to comment on the findings of the London School of Economics (LSE) and the Local Government Association (LGA) studies on Brexit and the impacts on cities and Local Authorities.
- The LSE study produced an analysis on the potential impact of both a Hard and Soft Brexit on UK cities and Local Authorities, and concluded that Aberdeen will be the UK's worst affected city when it comes to the economic repercussions of EU withdrawal.
- The LGA published a discussion document to kick start the conversation on what will replace EU funding post-Brexit. It calls on the UK government to replace the £8.4 billion in European Structural and Investment Funding (ESIF) allocated to the UK for the 2014-2020 programme period, and analysed three potential frameworks for financial support post-Brexit. It also recommended maintaining the seven-year period for funding programmes (and a further three years for projects to be completed and claims submitted) as this allows for long-term planning. This multi-annual approach is the same position as ESEC.
- Members noted the content of the studies. It was agreed that option 3 of the LGA proposals would be the ideal approach as it explicitly calls for continued access to transnational funds such as Erasmus, Interreg and Horizon 2020.
- There was consensus around the table that Brexit would have an impact on the economy and would mean a change in the way that certain services were delivered, how funding could be accessed, and on areas such as access to labour/seasonal workers for local employers.
- Members have taken various approaches in terms of briefing the relevant committees, colleagues and stakeholders. It was agreed that it would be helpful for ESEC to do a mapping exercise to determine how other authorities are approaching the issue.

### **ESEC Work Plan 2018**

- Joanne Scobie presented the ESEC Work Plan 2017, especially for the benefit of newer board

members. It was noted that the objectives, priorities and activities of the consortium were significantly updated at the end of last year in order to respond to developments around Brexit.

- It was agreed that Joanne Scobie would draft the Work Plan for 2018 to be presented at the next board meeting for comment and approval.

### **Familiarisation visit to Brussels, 2018**

- Given the developments around Brexit and the new make-up of the Policy Board, it is proposed that the upcoming months would be an opportune time for a familiarisation visit. The ESEC Secretariat, with Scotland Europa, will draft an agenda and will organise meetings, based on input from members on key priorities.
- As with the previous trips, ESEC will cover the cost of accommodation for one Policy Board councillor and one officer per member council, along with meals throughout the trip. Members participating in the trip will cover the cost of their flights.
- Members were requested to indicate their interest in the familiarisation visit, to suggest content, and to suggest suitable dates (before the end of March 2018).
- It was agreed by all members that such a trip would be of great value, especially in the context of the previous discussion around members' responses to Brexit, and all present confirmed their participation.
- It was proposed that one element of the visit could be to meet with local authority networks from EFTA/EEA and third countries in order to find out more about how they engage with the EU.
- It was agreed that the ESEC Secretariat would propose some dates for the visit, which would be selected depending on the availability of all members.

### **Draft audited accounts and annual report 2016/17**

- It was noted that normally the ESEC board approve and sign off the audited accounts and annual report at the end of September, however this year the scheduling of board meetings has been different due to the local elections in May. It was proposed that the approval of the accounts and annual report be delegated to the Scrutiny and Audit Committee at Angus Council, in order to remain legislatively compliant.
- The contents of the accounts and annual report were noted and it was agreed that their approval be delegated to the Scrutiny and Audit Committee in this instance.

### **Any other competent business**

- No other competent business.

### **Date of next meeting**

- The date of the next meeting will be sent by email.

