

Document 1

From: Leaver E (Ellen)
Sent: 27 September 2022 14:17
To: Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Briefing for SRG 28 September 2022 (A40737133)

Have had a look, some suggestions.

Ellen Leaver | Deputy Director, Local Government and Analytical Services | Scottish Government | LL: 0131 Redacted | Mob: Redacted

I am now working from VQ by default Mon-Thurs (WfH on Fri), please feel free to consider In Person meetings if suitable.

From: Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot>
Sent: 27 September 2022 13:48
To: Leaver E (Ellen) <Ellen.Leaver@gov.scot>
Subject: Briefing for SRG 28 September 2022 (A40737133)

Hi,

I need to do prep before my 2pm meeting on EU charter. I've pretty much finished the briefing for SRG, just need to add a bit more on the pay bit. Grateful for comments – added a slot in your diary for 3pm to review. I'll be out the meeting then so can catch up if helpful in between your meetings.

H

Click on the link to open 'Briefing for SRG 28 September 2022' - Redacted

STRATEGIC REVIEW GROUP	
TIMING	<p>Wednesday 28 September 2022 17:30-18:30 Virtually via Teams (link is in diary invite)</p>
ATTENDEES	<p>Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government Minister for Social Security and Local Government</p> <p>Official Support Ellen Leaver, DD Local Government & Analytical Services Division Redacted Local Government Policy & Relationships Redacted Local Government Policy & Relationships</p> <p>COSLA Councillor Shona Morrison, President Councillor Steven Heddle, Vice President</p> <p>Sarah Watters, Director – Membership and Resources James Fowlie, Director – Place Policy</p>
AGENDA	<p>ITEM 1 – Welcome (Chair – Cllr Morrison)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree minutes of last meeting <p>ITEM 2 – New Deal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress to date • Principles and next steps • Presidential and Ministerial dinner <p>ITEM 3 – Local Government Pay Deal</p> <p>ITEM 4 – AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dates of future meetings – 21 December, 29 March 2023
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain and reinforce our partnership with local government • To provide a basis for future partnership working • To discuss the New Deal progress its development
ANNEXES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex A – New Deal Principles • Annex B – DFM letter on Pay Deal Cap

ITEM 2	NEW DEAL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ISSUE/ BACKGROUND	<p>BACKGROUND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New Deal for Local Government is to be built around two core pillars: • A fiscal framework for Local Government, which is intended to establish agreed ways of working in the fiscal relationship, supporting greater transparency and accountability. • A partnership agreement which provides the framework for policy specific agreements, based on a shared value-based overarching agreement on outcomes and accountability. <p>FISCAL FRAMEWORK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the course of the summer (July to September, building on engagement started in January) officials have undertaken intensive collaborative work on a fiscal framework. • There have been more than 10 official level discussions with COSLA between July and the end of September. • Meetings have chiefly related to the most challenging work streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Principles ○ Funding of Local Government ○ Local Taxation ○ Fiscal Flexibilities <p>Fiscal Framework Progress Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been significant progress at official-level in relation to process improvements such as: • agreement on a more constructive process of engagement for Local Government in the Scottish Budget and Programme for Government processes; and • notional agreement on the necessity for a draft process and safeguards for the considerations of local tax proposals and new fiscal flexibilities. • Redacted <p>Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG and COSLA officials have agreed support for Principles that underpin the Fiscal Framework and the New Deal. Attached at Annex A • COSLA officials have informed SG officials that they would seek political approval at the Leaders' Meeting (30 September) for the Fiscal Framework principles, <u>but not the overarching New Deal principles.</u> <p>Redacted</p> <p>PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership Agreement describes a new approach for policy specific agreements with Local Government, based on

	<p>a shared value-based overarching agreement on relationship, outcomes and accountability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Partnership Agreement will require to dovetail with any work on Fiscal Flexibilities; it is necessary that fiscal responsibilities for local government (and for example removal of ring-fencing as a flexibility) go hand-in-hand with assurances on outcomes and accountability. • Key elements and work streams of the agreement are likely to be subject to agreement with COSLA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confidentiality and regard for each spheres of government, to support building trust and respect between Scottish Government and Local Government. ○ Roles in policy development, i.e. the interaction between SG policy development and LG delivery. ○ Shared value-based overarching agreement on outcomes. ○ Accountability and, delivery and reporting. ○ ensuring the Partnership Agreement is delivered and rooted in future working arrangements across both SG and LG as a whole <p style="text-align: center;">Redacted</p> <p>LOCAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW LINES – IF REQUIRED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LGR is now one element of the joint work we will be doing on the New Deal with Local Government • We are delighted to see that COSLA and indeed SOLACE are still keen to conclude the Democracy Matters 2 consultation • Our officials will be in touch with yours in mid-October to restart the process • We remain committed to this being a joint exercise between SG, COSLA and communities. <p>HANDLING GOING FORWARD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COSLA officers have informed us that there will need to be some careful and strategic handling of sharing the New Deal Principles with Leaders • We would advise that the President’s invitation to DFM and wider Ministerial colleagues to attend a dinner to discuss the New Deal would be a good first step in paving the way for a more collaborative approach. • We would also use the planned strategic engagement with Ministers and Presidential team (Monthly relationship meetings and future SRGs) to continue to progress and build agreement on the principles to then share with Leaders at an appropriate date.
<p>WHAT THE STAKEHOLDER MAY SAY/ASK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-design of the future direction of policies and programmes is paramount – co-design removes the sharp edges and can

	<p>bring in the expertise for LG and outcome is better buy in from LG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering and resourcing LG is key – role in economic recovery – specifically in workforce and investment. • COSLA officers primed and ready to work with SG officials.
<p>KEY MESSAGE(S)</p>	<p>Redacted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant progress recognised between SG officials and COSLA officers on the development of the Principles • Acknowledge the challenges in progressing partnership work due to capacity across the SG LG team and COSLA • Note the principles are a key yardstick for success and Cabinet colleagues will be considering them at the first meeting of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on the Local Government New Deal. • We are aware COSLA Leaders will be considering only some of the Principles at Leaders on Friday. What would help support COSLA at this time to get to a place where all Principles can be shared? How do we make that happen? • What are the key elements of the partnership agreement and fiscal framework COSLA would like to prioritise progress on before their next leaders meeting in October? • We are acting in good faith and progressing much of the work alongside and in advance of agreement of the fiscal framework, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ visitor levy; ○ devolution of EPR; ○ inviting COSLA to join a working group with ministers; exploring short term changes to council tax; and ○ considering the way forward for deliberative engagement on sources of LG funding in keeping with the Bute House agreement. • We're keen to make progress on these and develop a new deal with a fiscal framework which is consistent. • Keen to hear what COSLA want to see as part of this work and would propose this discussion continues at the dinner which myself and other Ministers look forward to.
<p>SUGGESTED QUESTION(S)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would help support COSLA at this time to get to a place where all Principles can be shared? How do we make that happen? • Parliament hold SG to account and SG need to be assured and confident outcomes will be delivered. How do we do this which builds trust and respect and reduces burdens • What are the quick wins for LG to signal the direction of travel so we can then work more on the New Deal.

ITEM 3	LG PAY DEAL
ISSUE/ BACKGROUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LG Pay Deal which has been offered to the LG workforce required both DFM and FM, in the later stages, to intervene to reach agreement between COSLA and the TUs. • Since the deal being made on 2 September, COSLA have requested the removal of the Cap for those earning more than £60,000, which the DFM is unwilling to reconsider. A letter outlining this was issued on 23 September. Attached at Annex B • The GMB Ballot closed on 23 September and the offer accepted. • UNISON and UNITE ballots close on 28 September. • COSLA are now looking for the Cabinet Secretary to support LG position during the next pay deal discussions for Health and Teachers
WHAT THE STAKEHOLDER MAY SAY/ASK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the upcoming Health and Teacher negotiations, it is important that these pay deals are aligned with the LG pay deal. If not it will make next year's pay negotiations even harder than this years. • We would ask that the Cabinet Sectary is highlighting this position as part of the wider ministerial discussions on health and teacher pay
KEY MESSAGE(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to recognise the efforts made by yourselves and Leaders to get to the position of making a pay deal offer and stopping the strike action • Appreciate that there were tensions and challenges in reaching this deal and still elements of it to finalise • I also recognise that the 2023/24 pay deal negotiations will be upon us very soon and need to consider how we work together this time round (noting COSLA ask and committing to representing the issues in the relevant forums)

Redacted

DMF letter to Cllr Haggmann – 23/09/2022

Thank you for your letter of 14 September seeking clarity on the package of support from the Scottish Government towards the local government 2022/23 pay deal.

I want to take this opportunity to recognise the efforts made by yourself and Leaders to get to the position of making a pay deal offer to the SJC on 2 September.

I am too grateful for the constructive work being taken forward by our officials and officers with regards to the policy flexibilities and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the outcome once those deliberations have concluded.

The agreement to pay the SSSC fees and use the 36 hour week for calculations forms part of the package for the 2022-23 pay deal. The package that was put forward included a day's annual leave and that was developed as part of the negotiations around the 22/23 pay deal.

I am aware that earlier this summer officials and officers held discussions about engaging more on pay and public sector pay policy, as well as matters such as working week and 4 Day working week. I believe these discussions are to resume again in the coming month.

Pay proposals should be set in the context of the need for on-going pay restraint for more senior staff to ensure available finite resources are focused appropriately on increases for lower earners, in line with Ministers' approach to public sector pay and their wider approach to addressing the cost of living crisis, reducing the gender pay gap and overall pay inequality. The public sector pay policy, which is always supported by an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) has included a cap in many years since its introduction in 2013-14. Mostly recently it recognises that any risk to the cohort covered by the pay cap is mitigated by the aim of the policy to work to reduce the gender pay gap and overall pay inequality, underpinning Ministerial objectives for a wealthier and fairer Scotland.

I am also aware that COSLA incorporated a cap at £80,000 as part of their 2018/19 pay deal. There have been no legal challenges to the Scottish Government in having a cap and to my knowledge there was no challenge to COSLA's 2018/19 pay deal either.

Not only do I consider a cap on pay increases for higher earners to be legitimate, but at a time of acute financial pressure, directing limited resources to those on lower incomes is also the right thing to do. Given this, and the importance placed of ensuring a cap was in place to reach an agreement with our Trade Union colleagues, I am unwilling to reconsider the inclusion of a cap at £60,000.

Document 3

From: Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot>

Sent: 27 September 2022 16:14

To: Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>; Minister for Social Security and Local Government <MinisterSSLG@gov.scot>

Cc: DG Communities <DGCommunities@gov.scot>; Director for Local Government and Housing <DirectorForLocalGovernment&Housing@gov.scot>; Leaver E (Ellen) <Ellen.Leaver@gov.scot>; Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot>; Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot>; Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot>

@gov.scot>; Redacted < Redacted @gov.scot>; Redacted < Redacted @gov.scot>

Subject: Briefing for SRG 28 September 2022

POs,

Please find attached the briefing and minutes of the last meeting for SRG tomorrow.

Regards

Redacted

Document 4

**Minute of Strategic Review Group meeting
30 June 2022 via Teams**

Attendees

Scottish Government

Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government (Chair)

Ben Macpherson, Minister for Social Security and Local Government

Tom Arthur, Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth

Supporting SG Officials – Ellen Leaver, Redacted

COSLA

Cllr Shona Morrison, COSLA President

Cllr Steven Heddle, COSLA Vice President

Nicola Dickie, Director of People Policy

Sarah Watters, Director of Membership and Resources

James Fowlie, Director of Place Policy

Redacted

1) Welcome and Introductions

Ms Robison welcomed those present to the Strategic Review Group (SRG) meeting. Given this was the first SRG for the new COSLA Presidential Team, she explained that the SRG's purpose was to facilitate regular strategic level political engagement to ensure there was appropriate oversight of the key issues impacting on local government. It was noted that the Monthly Relationship meeting was also a critical part of the engagement structure and this was led by Mr Macpherson.

2) Minute of meeting held on 28 March 2022

It was noted that the minutes of the last meeting had been agreed offline by officials due to a new COSLA Presidential Team being in post.

3) Aims and Ambitions

Ms Robison opened discussions by setting out the Scottish Government's aims and ambitions for local government including the importance of resetting the relationship between both spheres of government. She emphasised that a strong partnership required commitment and trust from both sides. The New Deal for local government would provide the opportunity to develop a Fiscal Framework and Partnership Statement and if there was any 'early wins' which could be identified the Scottish Government was open to considering these.

Cllr Morrison welcomed Ms Robison's update and commitment. She indicated that COSLA was in the process of developing its new Plan which would set out its priorities. She also highlighted the challenges issues like the National Care Service would bring to the partnership.

Cllr Heddle stressed that it was important to ensure that there was substance behind the partnership and that the removal of ring-fencing and additional powers – including revenue raising powers – for local authorities all had to be seriously considered. While COSLA was also ambitious about the future of local government the recently announced Resource Spending Review created challenges for local government pay deals and local authorities ability to improve services.

Ministers' acknowledged the challenging backdrop but highlighted that the development of the New Deal would look to address some of this and they would positively consider any achievable ideas from COSLA which could further empower local government.

4) Next Steps

Mr Macpherson noted that he looked forward to future monthly meetings with the Presidential Team and highlighted some of the progress he had made with COSLA in the last year on issues such as Councillor Remuneration. He looked forward to continuing to working collaboratively with COSLA and to being their voice with Scottish Government.

In response, COSLA welcomed the tone and honesty of the discussions and acknowledged this was a positive first step to reset the relationship. They were keen to ensure we move at pace to develop and shape the New Deal.

Action – officials agree to jointly develop the New Deal over the summer.

5) Date of future meetings

It was noted that dates for future meetings would be arranged but it was anticipated the next SRG would take place at the end of September.

Document 5

From: Redacted

Sent: 26 September 2022 17:02

To: Redacted < Redacted @gov.scot>; Redacted < Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>

Cc: Redacted < Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: SRG

Redacted

I've attached a copy of the draft minute of the last SRG meeting. This may have been shared previously.

Thanks

Redacted

From: Redacted < Redacted @gov.scot>

Sent: 23 September 2022 16:09

To: Redacted < Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>

Cc: Redacted < Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>; Redacted < Redacted @gov.scot>
Subject: RE: SRG

Hi Redacted, sorry for the delay. As you know we've not been able to progress as much as we had hoped on the PA over the summer and keen to pick this back up so it will be a more general discussion on that and how we take this forward.

Looking back, it is the Presidents turn to Chair the SRG.

Cheers

Redacted

From: Redacted < Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 September 2022 13:01
To: Redacted < Redacted @gov.scot>
Cc: Redacted < Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: SRG

Hi Redacted,

I hope you are well. We are in the process of pulling together a briefing for the SRG meeting. As part of this, I just wanted to check whether there were any particular issues relating to the New Deal and Partnership Agreement that Ms. Robison and Mr. Macpherson were likely to want to focus on? Has there been any update regarding an initial draft of the Partnership Agreement? My understanding is that a previous meeting to discuss the New Deal was unable to take place, so any information on what Ministers may be looking for from the discussion at SRG would be helpful.

Would it also be possible to check who is expected to chair next week's meeting? Again, my understanding is the SRG has a rotating chair, so wanted to confirm.

Many thanks,
Redacted

From: Redacted @gov.scot < Redacted @gov.scot>
Sent: 23 September 2022 10:38
To: Sarah Watters <sarah@cosla.gov.uk>; Redacted < Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>; Redacted @gov.scot
Cc: Redacted < Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>; Redacted @gov.scot
Subject: SRG

Hi all,

Hope you are doing well,

You'll be aware Redacted and POs are working together to secure a date for the next SRG, I know calendars have been really challenging so thank you Redacted for your efforts on this.

I thought it would be helpful to touch base on the agenda for this. I think the meeting might just be for an hour to allow for it to work in diaries so I am proposing the meeting focusses on the New Deal and next steps for the Partnership Agreement.

Grateful for thoughts on this.

Thanks
Redacted

Redacted

Redacted, Local Government Policy and Relationships

Directorate for Local Government and Communities,

Scottish Government

Redacted

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Document 6

From: Redacted
Sent: 26 September 2022 14:00
To: Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot>; Leaver E (Ellen) <Ellen.Leaver@gov.scot>; Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Hi folks, proposing this back to Redacted and will confirm with COSLA also. I have already proposed new deal as the focus with cosla.

Ellen, Redacted – I know we have a chat this afternoon about principles which will feed in to this

Redacted – good to get the DFM response on the dinner issued before SRG

Hi Redacted

The New Deal is the focus for this meeting. Officials will be Ellen, Redacted and myself, Sean is also hoping to attend. Suggested agenda is:

1. Welcome
2. New Deal
 - Progress to date
 - Principles
3. Next Steps
4. AOB (Ministerial and Presidential Dinner)

Redacted

From: Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government
Sent: 26 September 2022 11:45
To: Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot>
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Morning! Have sent the Teams link over to Redacted for Wednesday. We need to let her know agenda and attendees from our side – could I leave that with you please?

Just to flag I have seen that Kate Higgins isn't able to attend on Wednesday – do we need to try and find another SpAd to cover, or would we go without?

Many thanks,

Redacted

Redacted

Private Secretary | Office of Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG
Email: CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot

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From: Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government
Sent: 26 September 2022 11:44
To: Redacted <Redacted@cosla.gov.uk>
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Hi Redacted,

Apologies for the delay!

Here is the Teams link for Wednesday at 17:30:

Redacted

I will check with colleagues and come back to you on attendees and agenda as soon as possible.

Many thanks,

Redacted

Redacted

Private Secretary | Office of Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG
Email: CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot

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From: Redacted <Redacted@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government
Sent: 23 September 2022 13:50
To: Redacted <Redacted@cosla.gov.uk>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

That's great Redacted, thanks for that. We'll get an invite sent over asap (I'm travelling at the moment and Outlook won't quite cooperate with me that far).

Many thanks,

Redacted

Redacted

Private Secretary | Office of Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG

Email: CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot

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From: Redacted Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>

Sent: 23 September 2022 11:37

To: Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Good Morning Redacted

Yes, that time will be fine, thank you.

Can you please send through the Team link and I will forward with the diary hold to our Presidential Team.

Can you please also advise of Agenda and who will be in attendance from SG.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards

Redacted

Redacted

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EH12 5BH

☎0131

Redacted 📄0131 Redacted

Redacted cosla.gov.uk



From: Redacted @gov.scot <Redacted @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot
Sent: 23 September 2022 09:18
To: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Cc: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>; CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Hi Redacted

Hope you're well :-)) What about 17:30 on Wednesday 28th Sept?

Many thanks,

Redacted

Redacted

Private Secretary | Office of Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG
Email: CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot

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From: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 September 2022 09:02
To: Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>
Cc: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

No problem Redacted.

29th is out completely. If there are evening slots on 27th and 28th we can see what can be manoeuvred.

If we go for an evening slot though, I think we'd need to stick to the reduced meeting slot of an hour.

Have a lovely weekend when it comes.

Thank you
Redacted

From: CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>
Sent: 23 September 2022 08:54
To: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Cc: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>; CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Thanks Redacted! I'm travelling just now but once I get online I'll send some evening slots to Redacted. Just to check, are 28th and 29th out completely, or is that just during the day?

Thanks, and have a lovely long weekend!

Redacted

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

From: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 Sep 2022 08:48
To: "Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government" <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>
Cc: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Morning Redacted,

Just to let you know that I've forwarded your email to Cllrs Morrison and Heddle.

28th and 29th are both out due to other diary commitments, but we're looking to see if 27th is available.

I've cc'd my colleague Redacted into this email and my email to the Presidential Team as I'm actually on leave today and Monday.

We'll let you know asap if the team are available for a Teams call on 27th, but it may be helpful if you could provide some early evening slots as you suggested in your previous email.

Thank you
Redacted

Redacted
PA to Chief Executive, Senior Management Team and Presidential Team

COSLA
Verity House
19 Haymarket Yards
Edinburgh
EH12 5BH

Redacted

Redacted



From: Redacted @gov.scot <Redacted @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot
Sent: 22 September 2022 20:05
To: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Cc: CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Hi Redacted,

I hope you're well! I've been speaking with officials, and we thought in a bid to help make this easier to get in the diaries we could reduce the meeting length to an hour? On that basis I could suggest

- Tuesday 27th September – 15:00
- Wednesday 28th September – 16:00
- Thursday 29th September – 09:00 (I think Alan might have suggested that already though!) or 14:00.

I know how challenging aligning diaries can be, so I hope this is helpful. An alternative is we could look at timeslots later in the evening if that would help?

I'd be grateful if you could test these slots with the Presidential Team, and let me know how you get on :-) Good luck!

Many thanks,

Redacted

Redacted

Private Secretary | Office of Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG
Email: CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot

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From: Redacted <Redacted @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government
Sent: 21 September 2022 12:32
To: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Good afternoon Redacted,

I hope you enjoyed your leave.

I am afraid the only availability, for the following week, we have currently is 14:30-16:00 on the 4th of October.

Unfortunately this is during Parliamentary Business, so could be cancelled as we do not yet have the whip to confirm our attendance.

I have held this time for you and if you could let me know if it is of use, we can provisionally hold the meeting then.

Many thank,

Redacted

Redacted
Assistant Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government – Shona Robison MSP
The Scottish Government
St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG

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From: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 September 2022 10:01
To: Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Morning Redacted,

Apologies for the delay in getting back to you. I've been on leave since last Thursday.

I'm afraid that neither Cllr Morrison nor Cllr Heddle are available at all on the morning of 29th.

Could you let me know please of any availability that the Cab Sec has the following week?

Thank you
Redacted

From: Redacted @gov.scot <Redacted @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot
Sent: 20 September 2022 15:32
To: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Cc: CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot
Subject: RE: SG-COSLA Strategic Review Group

Good morning Redacted,

I hope you are well.

I am afraid I have had to schedule the meeting on the morning of the 29th, I have made it as short as possible and am still holding 09:00- 10:15 for you.

Please let me know if this would suit.

Many thanks,

Redacted

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From: Redacted
Sent: 27 September 2022 11:14
To: Sarah Watters <sarah@cosla.gov.uk>
Cc: Lucy Devlin <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>; Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: SRG agenda

Grand, thank you. Had the same thought about dinner when I had sent it.

Redacted

From: Sarah Watters <sarah@cosla.gov.uk>
Sent: 27 September 2022 11:12
To: Redacted <Redacted @gov.scot>
Cc: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>; Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: SRG agenda

Sorry, also need to review the minute of last meeting
Sarah

From: Sarah Watters
Sent: 27 September 2022 11:11
To: Redacted @gov.scot
Cc: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>; Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: SRG agenda

Hi there

Likely that Ministerial and presidential dinner will come up as part of Item 2- it's a practical step along the way, and will build the relationship before we can have a new deal/partnership agreement
Sarah

From: Redacted @gov.scot <Redacted @gov.scot>
Sent: 27 September 2022 11:05
To: Sarah Watters <sarah@cosla.gov.uk>
Cc: Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>; Redacted <Redacted @cosla.gov.uk>
Subject: SRG agenda

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Hi Sarah,

Just wanted to follow up after your call with Ellen. Does the below look ok as an agenda for tomorrow?

- ITEM 1** – Welcome (Chair – Cllr Morrison)
- ITEM 2** – New Deal
 - Progress to date
 - Principles and next steps
- ITEM 3** – Local Government Pay Deal
- ITEM 4** – AOB

- Ministerial and Presidential Dinner
- Dates of future meetings – 21 December, 29 March 2023

Cheers

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Local Government Policy and Relationships

Directorate for Local Government and Communities,

Scottish Government

Redacted

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**Minute of Strategic Review Group meeting
28 September 2022 via Teams**

Attendees

Scottish Government

Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

Ben Macpherson, Minister for Social Security and Local Government

Supporting SG Officials – Ellen Leaver, Redacted, Redacted

COSLA

Cllr Shona Morrison, COSLA President (Chair)
Cllr Steven Heddle, COSLA Vice President
Nicola Dickie, Director of People Policy
Sarah Watters, Director of Membership and Resources
Redacted
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1) Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Morrison welcomed those present to the Strategic Review Group (SRG) meeting.

2) Minute of meeting held on 30 June 2022

The minute of the previous meeting held on 30 June was agreed as an accurate record.

3) New Deal

Cllr Morrison opened discussions by explaining that COSLA were seeking a more measured way of conducting business moving forward. Capacity was stretched within COSLA and Council Leaders have significant pressures on their diaries too. The need for greater policy co-production, similar to how work was done during Covid, was also emphasised. The National Care Service and the reactive approach to Winter planning were cited as two examples of where co-design had not been carried out sufficiently.

In terms of the New Deal, COSLA suggested this had to sit within the Local Governance Review (LGR). The development of a Fiscal Framework was welcome but had to provide the platform to protect and enhance local government funding. Funding flexibilities were also an essential part of this but also to ensuring the current LG pay deals could be affordable for councils.

Ms Robison agreed that the LGR was an essential element of the joint working on the New Deal and recognised that greater flexibilities underpinned by shared priorities was the goal everyone wanted to achieve. However, it was acknowledged that trust and accountability would be key to this being successful.

The Group agreed that it was important to get the New Deal right so that it set the conditions for working together in future. It was further noted that SG officials would seek to re-engage with COSLA officers on the LGR in mid-October and that a political dinner was in the process of being organised which would allow a space for candid discussions on the challenges and expectations of the New Deal.

4) Local Government Pay Deal

COSLA raised a number of issues associated with the recent local government pay deal. Specifically, they highlighted that they were still awaiting a ministerial response on their proposed flexibilities, raised concerns around the £60k cap, and sought reassurance that other pay bargaining groups would not be treated differently to the LG workforce. It was noted, for example, that a higher offer to teachers could lead to a re-opening of the LG SJC pay negotiations.

In response, Ministers noted that a formal response on flexibilities would be sent shortly, the public sector pay policy had included a cap in a number of years and that those on lowest incomes should be supported, and that live negotiations were ongoing across a number of distinct bargaining groups which had to be respected.

5) AOB

None.

6) Date of future meetings

It was noted that dates of future meetings would be 21 December 2022 and 29 March 2023.