

OUTCOMES FROM THE CONVENTION OF THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS – 22 OCTOBER 2018 – ELGIN

Outcome 1 – Potential Future Projects	Deputy Director / Policy Lead	Update since October 2018
<p>COHI welcomed this work to identify future projects of strategic significance and expressed unanimous support for the collaboration across partners and with the private sector. The role of HIE in leading this was recognised, recognising that a bespoke solution will be required to deliver each project.</p> <p>The COHI Senior Officers Group will be tasked with taking this work forward and ensuring COHI is provided with regular updates. This work will recognise the importance of flexibility and adapting to opportunities that arise.</p> <p>A letter will be sent to Michael Gove about the importance of replacing support provided by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). Opportunities to include the Strategic Projects identified through this process in the forthcoming National Planning Framework will be considered.</p>	<p>Joe Brown</p>	<p>Identified projects of strategic significance are progressing with support from HIE and the Senior Officer Group (SOG). Updates to COHI will be incorporated in the general written report on cross-cutting SOG projects provided annually to Convention members at Autumn meetings.</p> <p>Various letters have been sent to Michael Gove and he has confirmed that there will be a replacement scheme for the EMFF which will be administered by the Devolved Administrations, however this still requires a case to be put to HM Treasury, probably in May. SG Ministers are yet to make decisions on how any future funding will be used and any decisions to identify projects through the National Planning Framework would follow.</p> <p>The Planning Bill will give new statutory status to the National Planning Framework (NPF), making it part of the Development Plan, and this will also incorporate Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). Preparation of the new NPF and SPP will begin once the Bill has completed its passage through Parliament.</p>

Outcome 2 – Daylight Savings	Deputy Director / Policy Lead	Update since October 2018
COHI members raised considerable concerns about the European Commission’s proposed Directive to end seasonal clock changes in the EU in 2019. The Scottish Government will ensure these are reflected in ongoing discussions with the UK Government.	Joe Brown	COHI’s agreed position was conveyed to UK Government by the Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy on 23rd October 2018. In November 2018 the UK Parliament issued a Reasoned Opinion that the proposal is inconsistent with the principle of subsidiarity (which is that the EU should only act where there is clear added value and similar benefits cannot be achieved by Member States acting at a national, regional or local level). A number of other member states have also returned similar opinions. The Commission, Council, and Parliament are considering that response, which effectively means that it is not now clear whether, how and when the proposed Directive will be progressed.
Outcome 3 – Skills	Deputy Director / Policy Lead	Update since October 2018
Building on an example of Western Isles Council and Skills Development Scotland, we will work across partners over the next year to identify and plan a programme of responses to the sub-regional population and skills challenges of the Highlands and Islands.	Oonagh Gil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SDS have committed significant additional resources, along with support from HIE, to ensure the H&I Sector Investment Plan Action Plan evolves and responds to population and skills challenges ahead. •A draft Interim Report has been produced and used to inform ongoing consultation across a wide range of stakeholders from the public/private sector •The Action Plan will set out a 10-year strategic vision and detail actions, outcomes and outputs for each themes ensuring progress can be monitored. •Recommendations on future governance of the HISIP Action Plan is still to be finalised

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The final HISIP Action Plan will be shared with key public/private partners to secure commitment to a co-ordinated approach. •It is anticipated that the renewed HISIP Action Plan, and a report on implementation, will be an agenda item at CoHI in October 2019. <p>Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CNES) and SDS have been working closely to address the socio-economic challenges and acknowledge that the need to address skills and population holistically, more collaboratively and with a common purpose. They are currently working on the fine details of a Community Charter which will set out how to align services, people, infrastructure and their approach to support economic development and community empowerment.</p> <p>SDS CEO has approached Orkney and Shetland Islands Councils to continue discussion on the roll out of similar Island Community Charters SDS have offered a revised Operation Plan to CNES and advertised for key staff to lead roll out. The Charter will include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Co-location of public sector partners one-stop shop approach. •an integrated education, skills and training strategic plan •developing work based learning including a Foundation Apprenticeship offer to all pupils in the senior phase. •incorporating an offer of housing and home ownership in the Eilean Siar Apprenticeship offer. •developing enhanced transport for the young workforce. <p>As well as continued development of Esgoil online learning, training delivery and accreditation mechanism platform for pupils, apprentices and the wider community.</p>
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		A full progress report on this activity will take place at CoHI in October 2019.
Outcome 4 – Talent Attraction	Deputy Director / Policy Lead	Update since October 2018
A commitment to a compelling, inclusive, all embracing campaign to attract people to each area of the region and each economic growth area along the model of Scotland is Now, including a commitment by public bodies to work together to have shared recruitment campaigns.	Oonagh Gil	<p>HIEs Chief Executive met with VisitScotland and SDS earlier this month to discuss how best to work together to ensure an aligned and optimised regional approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A partnership proposition is taking shape to maximise promotion of the region’s opportunities at local, regional and national level by co-ordinating activity. <p>Community Planning partnership partners are tasked with talent attraction with the CoHI Talent Attraction Working Group giving direction, identifying and sharing good practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building and maintaining a regional specific response will be done in parallel and will work with Brand Scotland partners, and in connection with its ScotlandisNow, Talent Scotland and any future iterations/campaigns where practical and possible. <p>This will integrated approach to targeted campaigns, for example, the international targeted campaign for attracting teachers planned for March.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next CoHI Talent Attraction meeting is on 6th March.
Outcome 5 – Post Brexit Regional Policy	Deputy Director / Policy Lead	Update since October 2018
COHI recognised the importance of European Funding to the economic development and communities of the Highlands and Islands and wishes to retain the character and principles present in current EU regional policy which is so effective in identifying regional need and ensuring funding is focussed accordingly and in timeframes which are appropriately strategic.	David Anderson	<p>We continue to work with the UK Government expressing the points made by COHI. The policy position is well understood and common to all those who have expressed a view on European Funding.</p> <p>The UK Government has undertaken a series of stakeholder events in Scotland in Autumn 2018 which have provided no meaningful further information on the Shared Prosperity Fund. The UK Government have delayed the start of the consultation on the SPF until</p>

<p>Members ask SG to continue to work with the UK Government to ensure that the Shared Prosperity Fund, City and Growth Deals and underpinning Regional Economic Policy is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome-focused, flexible and responsive to the distinctive characteristics and ambitions for the Highlands and Islands; • Administratively efficient and straightforward yet inclusive and collaborative with aligned local, regional and national accountability and empowerment; and • Multi-year, additional and at least comparable to previous European funding in diversity and quantum. 		<p>January 2019. They have also confirmed that the detail of the SPF will not be finalised until the UK Spending Review, anticipated later in 2019.</p> <p>SG Officials continue to press for meaningful engagement with the development of the SPF, and not simply that of a 'consultee'.</p> <p>The terms of EU-exit will influence the future potential to access EU challenge funding, including European Territorial Cooperation funding.</p>
<p>Outcome 6 – Digital</p>	<p>Deputy Director / Policy Lead</p>	<p>Update since October 2018</p>
<p>Ofcom are keen to work with COHI members; happy to provide data and technical expertise to Scottish Local Authorities; looking to reduce civil engineering costs associated with building telecoms networks "from scratch".</p> <p>COHI members are still looking for information on just how far R100 will go; looking for ability to implement interim solutions and potentially invest their own resources to do so – SG will provide information once contracts have been awarded, and are happy to discuss Aligned</p>	<p>Colin Cook / Andy Manson</p>	<p>So far, just one Local Authority – Argyll & Bute – has contacted Ofcom, who gave a presentation to Council members in Lochgilphead. Ofcom have reiterated their interest in working with COHI members, and indicated that COSLA may represent the best mechanism for doing so.</p> <p>Procurement continues to progress well, and we will award contracts for R100 in 2019. An Aligned Interventions scheme is being developed in parallel, and we will provide further detail, once the coverage footprint for R100 has been established. Members of the R100</p>

<p>Interventions/alternative technology solutions with local authorities.</p> <p>Possibility of relaying tourism hot spots to mobile network operators to encourage them to invest in network build in those areas where the resident population is low.</p> <p>SG to work more closely with Ofcom to create a more effective regulatory framework.</p> <p>Use COHI forum to better monitor progress</p> <p>Focus further COHI discussions on digital on the issues of benefits realisation, once infrastructure is in place</p> <p>SG to write to DCMS on behalf of COHI to express disappointment at non-appearance of Ministers and officials.</p>		<p>team have engaged with all 7 Local Authorities in the HIE area.</p> <p>We are considering how tourism information can be captured as part of activity, in the first instance, to encourage mobile network operators (MNOs) to use sites being taken forward as part of the Scottish 4G Infill Programme (S4GI). These areas all have low resident populations, therefore if a correlation with a tourism hotspots can be found, tourist footfall data could be valuable evidence towards securing the commitment of MNOs in using S4GI sites.</p> <p>Ministers have engaged in regular discussions with both Sharon White, Ofcom’s CEO, and members of Ofcom’s Scotland team on regulatory issues relevant to Scotland.</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A – digital not on next COHI agenda</p> <p>DFM will address this matter in a letter to DCMS.</p>
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