

Seven Scottish city leaders make a unified call for change

The seven cities which make up the Scottish Cities Alliance have published a report 'Empowering City Government' which calls for a change in the way the UK and Scottish governments work.



If existing ways of working were changed then city leaders say it would allow their urban areas to reach their full economic potential and compete both at home and globally.

Scottish city leaders believe they are at a disadvantage over their English equivalents. They say that English cities are "gaining a competitive advantage" as a result of their City Region and Devolution deals which allow them to form new working arrangements with key partners.

Scotland's cities provide more than 60% of the workforce.

The city leaders have set out a four point plan which could give the councils new tax powers, a new framework for spending and would allow massive infrastructure projects to develop.

In its blueprint for unprecedented change, the local authority leaders call for a new cross-city partnership with the likes of Transport Scotland with cities sharing in key policy decision-making. The report explains the leaders' 'asks': "They represent a step change in the commitment of Scotland's seven cities to work collaboratively together with the two governments to drive the positive change needed to ensure our cities remain globally attractive to the investment and talent

for growth.”

The report also puts forward plans for closer working ties with other national infrastructure bodies, like Scottish Water and Zero Waste Scotland.

Leader of City of Edinburgh Council, Councillor Andrew Burns, said: “Scotland’s seven cities are committed to driving forward economic growth, so we can continue to promote ourselves on the international stage as attractive, modern places to invest and to carry out business with. The important research we have commissioned suggests that a new partnership is required if we are to reach our economic potential and meet the significant challenges that lie ahead.

“Fundamental to this new approach are a number of shared objectives which include improving connectivity and infrastructure, setting a diverse tax system across Scotland, improving our communities and a radical change to economic development. We firmly believe that by embracing these key changes we can ensure Scotland can compete economically with other cities close to home and globally.”

Councillor Burns said he wanted Scotland’s seven major cities – Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, Perth and Stirling – to be given a clear, strategic role in directing investments to cities and city regions.

He said the new partnership would see local government, central government, national agencies and key business stakeholders working collaboratively to maximise the benefits from both local decision-making and joint working on prioritised national outcomes.

Councillor Burns continued: “We look forward to early discussions with both the Scottish and UK Governments to take this forward for the benefit of the whole of Scotland.”

[The full report is available here](#) and below



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