

# City Region Deal still firmly on the horizon



The City Deal for Edinburgh and the surrounding area is a big deal. It could bring as much as £1-2 billion into the region's economy, if and when it goes ahead. And the emphasis is on when according to council leaders speaking to the media earlier this week.

It was given a one line mention during the Chancellor George Osborne's budget in the spring of this year.

*"This Budget announces that the government will also work with local partners and the Scottish Government towards a deal for Edinburgh and South East Scotland."*

Since then there has of course been a lot of change including a change of Chancellor, Prime Minister and the councillors explained to us that changes have also been made to the personnel in the civil service. Those changes have presented a challenge to the process, but they maintain that the deal is still very much on track.



Council Leader –  
Andrew Burns

Council Leader Andrew Burns told us : "To give you a brief update on the City Region Deal, obviously there has been a change in the team both politically and at an officer level that we are negotiating with, and at the Treasury level at Westminster. George Osborne is no longer there. He has been replaced by a new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond. Not only has that changed the civil servants have all

changed as well. That has provided a little challenge, but on the positive side, we are still working towards the next iteration in the Autumn Statement in November.

“What we are hoping to get is the broad heads of terms on the City Region Deal in the Autumn Statement all with the same local partners and the Scottish and UK Governments. It is driven by the UK big diary events so that will then will lead into March 2017 budget when everything will be finalised. This is just ahead of purdah before the council elections.

“Collectively we are still working towards it being done and dusted before the end of this administration. There have been no changes at Scottish level as David Mundell, Andrew Dunlop and Keith Brown are still dealing with this here.”

The details of the plans are not yet finalised, and they will not be until March next year, but the bottom line is that this is a good news story for Edinburgh. It always has been. It was good news for Glasgow when they got their deal, and any inward investment or a means of investment for any area has to be good news.

There is a lot of information about the City Deal and what it will mean on the council website. Watch this video here to find out what all the council leaders thing about the opportunity:

Councillor Burns concluded: “We are still looking at £1 -2 billion so this is a big deal for us. It is not free money, we are not getting something for nothing as it is all based on economic growth and projected tax receipts to pay for it.”

Councillor Frank Ross agreed, saying : “It is still hugely significant for the city.”

Asked if there was a delay, the council leader admitted that they had hoped for more detail by the time of the Autumn

Statement, but that they always knew that the final confirmation would be in the March 2017 budget. Cllr Burns referred to his own decision to resign at the next elections in May 2017 and said : “There has probably been a slight elongation, but we want to keep the pace up as much as possible since we have a political shelf life!”

Councillor Ross concluded : “It was only announced that the UK Government were going to start negotiations in the spring budget this year, so perhaps we were trying to make things go a bit quicker. But if you look at other deals they have all gone through this same kind of timescale. The most recent one in Cardiff went through the same year to eighteen months process.”

The crunch time was in March 2016 when the one sentence in the budget cemented the Edinburgh deal. Councillor Burns wrote on the Accelerating Growth blog on 17 March 2016 : “This week’s commitment from Westminster is a very positive step forward for our proposals to tackle inequality and accelerate substantial growth through investment in innovation, skills and infrastructure.”

It is just over a year since the six bid partners submitted their application to the UK Government for the deal designed to accelerate growth in the capital and the surrounding areas, and as we all know the wheels of government do not always turn quickly!

Here is the booklet outlining what is on offer for the city and the wider region



Loading...



Taking too long?



Reload document

| [↗ Open in new tab](#)  
[Download \[162.00 B\]](#)