

# Council will get an update on City Region Deal in the New Year

✖ At this week's council meeting, and in answer to a question from the Green Group leader Steve Burgess, the council leader admitted that no report on any progress with the city region deal has been made to the council since June 2016, but he confirmed that negotiations will carry on until the next UK budget in the spring.

On 23 November in their autumn statement the UK Government confirmed they would go ahead with the deal, and Cllr Burgess understood there had been a meeting involving the Chief Executive only last week.

The council leader also confirmed that the council will next discuss the deal at the January council meeting in January 2017, when a brief report will explain how the plan is developing. The council leader said he was grateful for patience all political groups in the City Chambers have shown in this regard, while negotiations are ongoing. He is also hopeful that the negotiations will mean that the deal is signed off in the spring.

Councillor Burgess wanted to ask if the City Region Deal would ensure sustainability with an economy pioneering jobs, and promoting rich clean and green economy

Council Leader said that part of the reason for the deal is to help the area cope with population growth, and that sustainability runs through its core.

The council approved a report in the summertime to proceed with a council contribution of £100 million which could unlock investment of anywhere between £2 -5 billion. The other

partners in the deal are East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian.

There are four focuses : innovation hubs, infrastructure investment, regional housing and cultural tourism.

At the time the council formally approved the move Council Leader Andrew Burns said: "These ambitious proposals form the basis of our negotiations with the UK and Scottish Governments and the robust and detailed business cases are being developed. This will result in the region becoming increasingly attractive for inward investment.

"A deal on this scale cannot be delivered by the public sector alone and private sector involvement is going to be key as we drive this forward. The deal will also give the region greater autonomy on determining investment priorities and will help to identify and deliver appropriate solutions to local issues and opportunities.

"Working in partnership with stakeholders in the business and academic communities is crucial to the bid's success. The region's universities and colleges are at the heart of the bid development and I am delighted that to date over 300 businesses have pledged their support."

The first City region deal was signed in August 2014 when the Scottish Government promised to spend £500 million in Glasgow. The deal is between both the UK Government, the Scottish Government and in the case of Glasgow eight separate local authorities. This is estimated to create an infrastructure investment fund of £1.13 billion and allow the introduction of £3.3 billion in private sector investment.

A deal for Aberdeen City Region was signed on 21 November 2016.