

**Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Industrial Communities – Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

**In attendance** – Colin Beattie MSP (Chair), Alex Rowley MSP, Clare Adamson MSP, Tom Arthur MSP, Andy Wightman MSP, Cllr. Altany Craik, Cllr. Russell Imrie, Bob Young, Jayne Baxter, Andrew Ralston, Ian McCrory, Andrew Ralston, Dr. Brian McVey, Roddy MacDonald.

**Apologies** – Richard Leonard MSP, Angus MacDonald MSP, John Mason MSP, Cllr. Mohrag Fischer, Cllr. John McGhee, Cllr. Peter Henderson, Cllr. Tony Buchanan, Cllr. Stephen Curran, Cllr. Margot Russell, Cllr. Andrew Wood, Prof. Steve Fothergill, Prof. John Bachtler, Malcolm Leitch, David Greer, Sandra Brown.

**Minutes of the Previous Annual General Meeting dated 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

The minutes were approved. Proposed by Bob Young and seconded by Ian McCrory.

**Annual General Meeting and Appointment of Officer Bearers.**

Alex Rowley MSP took the Chair for this item and the following decisions were made;

- Colin Beattie MSP for the position of Convener – proposed by Bob Young and seconded by Clare Adams MSP. Duly elected.
- Alex Rowley MSP for the position of Deputy Convener – proposed by Colin Beattie MSP and seconded by Cllr. Altany Craik. Duly elected.
- Roddy MacDonald for the position of Secretary – proposed by Colin Beattie MSP and seconded by Bob Young. Duly elected.

**Minutes of the Cross-Party Group Meeting dated 20<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

Minutes were proposed by Cllr. Altany Craik and seconded by Cllr. Russell Imrie with no matters arising.

**Inquiry by the Scottish Parliament’s Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee – Submission from the Industrial Communities Alliance, Scotland**

The following points were highlighted from the Submission;

- Within Alliance member authorities, EU funding is widely regarded as one of the principal tools in promoting economic regeneration. The loss of this funding, following the UK’s departure from the EU, is therefore regarded with alarm and the Alliance has been active in calling for replacement funding to be put in place by the UK Government. In 2017 the Alliance published proposals on *Post-Brexit Regional Policy* that have been widely circulated

and debated with a wide degree of support expressed for the main points raised. The Alliance submission gives particular attention to the distinctively Scottish dimension to the issues raised by the anticipated ending of EU funding. The focus, therefore, was on future programmes (questions 8-10 in the Committee's call for evidence.)

- The submission was built on 5 main pillars. 1. *The Overall Scale of the Fund* – it is critical that the new Shared Prosperity Fund is resourced on a scale that at least matches the EU funding that it will replace. It also requires to be fully operational from January 2021 so that there is no hiatus and operates on the basis of multiannual financial allocations. 2. *Scotland's share of the new Fund* – in the present 2014-20 EU spending round Scotland is set to receive a total of around £800m from the two main EU funds, the European Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). In the view of Alliance Scotland, and the GB-wide Alliance body, there is little obvious justification for a shift in the shares of funding going to Scotland and the other three nations of the UK. 3. *Local Financial Allocations* – EU funding has been generally targeted at the less prosperous local economies across Europe as a whole and within the UK in particular. This is something that the Industrial Communities Alliance would wish to see maintained in the allocation of the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Indeed the allocation of the new fund within Scotland should be a matter for the Scottish Government and not the UK Government. However, the allocation of funds across Scotland is something that the Scottish Government might be encouraged to look at. 4. *Flexibility* – the rules associated with EU funding have been convoluted and excessive. The new fund provides an opportunity for greater simplicity and effectiveness while maintaining transparency and accountability. There is also the opportunity to tailor the new fund more closely to Scotland's own priorities. In particular the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy – published in 2015 – added a new priority for inclusive growth. The strategy also recognises that there is a place based dimension. 5. *Local Authority Input to Management* – the establishment of the new fund provides an opportunity to introduce more inclusive management structures. In the view of Alliance Scotland there should be a new emphasis on decision-making by Local Authorities, including through cross-boundary working on strategic projects.

### **The Industrial Strategy and a Scottish Dimension – Meeting with the Cabinet Secretary on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

The following points were highlighted from the Paper;

- The meeting was conducted in a respectful and thorough manner. All of the 'Asks' were carefully considered by the Cabinet Secretary. His responses to our 'Asks' are summarised below.
- The Manufacturing Action Plan will be reviewed in the context of the UK Government's Industrial Strategy and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund; City Deals, Borderlands – a deal for every part of Scotland is a Scottish Government objective; the Scottish Government is determined to move at pace with the Scottish National Investment Bank; the important role of Enterprise and Skills Agencies were underlined; meetings have taken place with the Scottish Secretary, David Mundell, regarding Growth Deals. "Acceleration" is dependent on whether the UK Government becomes a partner.

Following wide ranging discussion on both of the above agenda items the following was decided;

- Colin Beattie MSP would write to Keith Brown MSP to discern whether any progress had been made by the Scottish Government on the 'Asks' emerging from the Industrial Strategy Scotland Dimension Paper.
- Cllr. Altany Craik also proposed that the Policy Advisory Group Scotland be convened to draft a paper on 'The Key Principles of Allocation in Scotland of the Proposed UK Shared Prosperity Fund'. This paper would be considered at the next Cross-Party Group meeting and if agreed would form the core agenda for the anticipated meeting with the Cabinet Secretary in October 2018.

### **Potential future items for the 2018/19 Session**

A 'brainstorming exercise' took place within the Group and the following ideas emerged;

- Further discussion on the Scottish National Investment Bank would be of significant interest led by an appropriate Scottish Government Official. Roddy MacDonald agreed to pursue.
- Other items relating to European Structural & Investment Funds; Developing the Young Workforce and the importance of Heritage within our Industrial Communities were raised. It was agreed that Roddy MacDonald would draft a short paper for consideration by the membership of the Group.

### **AOCB**

It was noted that a Cross-Party Group on Basic Income is being established. It would be worth 'keeping an eye' on their progress and agenda.

*Note from Secretariat* – The Cross-Party Group held its first meeting on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The Group is co-chaired by Ivan McKee MSP and Alex Rowley MSP and the Secretariat is provided by the RSA and Citizens Basic Income Network Scotland. Initial Themes identified by the Group include the following;

- Health
- Automation/Future of Work/Artificial Intelligence
- Basic Income as a human rights policy/Relationship with Sustainable Development Goals
- Scottish Pilots

### **Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place in September 2018.