

Notice of Meeting and Agenda Glasgow & the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority Joint Committee.

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 11 March 2024	11:15	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

MARK CONAGHAN
Clerk

Membership

Councillor Lawrence O'Neill (Convener); Councillor David Wilson (Vice-Convener).

Councillor Jim Gibbons and Councillor Alan Moir (East Dunbartonshire Council); Councillor Paul Edlin and Councillor Colm Merrick (East Renfrewshire Council); Councillor Kenny McLean and Councillor Ken Andrew (Glasgow City Council); Councillor Chris Curley (Inverclyde Council); Councillor Tom Fisher and Councillor Allan Stubbs (North Lanarkshire Council); Councillor John McNaughtan and Councillor Jim Paterson (Renfrewshire Council); Councillor Richard Nelson and Councillor Robert Brown (South Lanarkshire Council); and Councillor Gurpreet Singh Johal (West Dunbartonshire Council).

Hybrid Meeting

Please note that this meeting is scheduled to be held in the Council Chambers, Renfrewshire Council. However, it is a hybrid meeting and arrangements have been made for members to join the meeting remotely should they wish.

Further Information

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

A copy of the agenda and reports for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the Customer Service Centre, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley and online at <http://renfrewshire.cmis.uk.com/renfrewshire/CouncilandBoards.aspx>

For further information, please email
democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Members of the Press and Public

Members of the press and public wishing to attend the meeting should report to the customer service centre where they will be met and directed to the meeting.

Items of business

Apologies

Apologies from members.

Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

Members are asked to declare an interest or make a transparency statement in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest or the transparency statement.

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|----------|--|----------------|
| 1 | Minute | 5 - 8 |
| | Minute of meeting of the Joint Committee held on 22 January 2024. | |
| 2 | Revenue Budget Monitoring | 9 - 12 |
| | Report by Treasurer and Head of Economy & Development Services, Renfrewshire Council. | |
| 3 | Annual Audit Plan 2023/24 | 13 - 48 |
| | Report by Treasurer. | |
| 4 | Regional Spatial Planning Arrangements | 49 - 54 |
| | Report by Director of Regional Economic Growth submitted to Glasgow City Region-City Deal Cabinet. | |
| 5 | Date of Next Meeting | |
| | Note that the next meeting of the Joint Committee will be held at 11.15 am on 10 June 2024. | |

Minute of Meeting

Glasgow & the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority Joint Committee.

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 22 January 2024	11:15	Ground Floor Conference Room, Exchange House, 231 George Street, Glasgow G1 1RX,

Present

Councillor Jim Gibbons (East Dunbartonshire Council), Councillor Paul Edlin (East Renfrewshire Council), Councillor Ken Andrew (Glasgow City Council), Councillor John McNaughtan and Councillor Jim Paterson (Renfrewshire Council), Councillor Robert Brown (South Lanarkshire Council) and Councillor Lawrence O'Neill (West Dunbartonshire Council).

Chair

Councillor O'Neill, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

H Holland, Executive Officer - Land Planning & Development (East Dunbartonshire Council); S Shaw, Head of Planning (Glasgow City Council); A Morrison, Head of Economy & Development Services, D Campbell, Managing Solicitor (Licensing) and E Currie, Senior Committee Services Officer (all Renfrewshire Council); M Spurway, Development, Planning & Place Officer (West Dunbartonshire Council) and K Rush, Director of Regional Economic Growth (Glasgow City Region).

Apologies

Councillor Alan Moir (East Dunbartonshire Council), Councillor Colm Merrick (East Renfrewshire Council), Councillor David Wilson (Inverclyde Council), Councillor Kenny McLean (Glasgow City Council), Councillor Tom Fisher (North Lanarkshire Council) and Councillor Gurpreet Singh Johal (West Dunbartonshire Council).

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Transparency Statements

Councillor O'Neill indicated that he had a connection to item 2 by reason of him being an employee of Glasgow City Council. However, he indicated that he had applied the objective test and did not consider he had an interest to declare.

Additional Item

The Convener intimated that there was an additional item in relation to a briefing note by the Director of Regional Economic Growth, Glasgow City Region in connection with governance arrangements for RSS which had not been included in the notice calling the meeting. The Convener, being of the opinion that the item, which is dealt with during item 2 below, was urgent in view of the need to advise members of the position, authorised its consideration.

1 Minutes

There were submitted the Minute of the meeting of this Joint Committee held on 11 September 2023 and the Minute of the special meeting of this Joint Committee held on 26 September 2023.

DECIDED: That the Minutes be approved.

2 Budget Monitoring Report

There was submitted a joint revenue budget monitoring report by the Treasurer and the Head of Economy & Development Services, Renfrewshire Council for the period to 10 November 2023.

The report intimated that by 31 March 2024, the forecast position for Clydeplan was a projected underspend of £174,000 and further detail was provided in Appendix 1 to the report. In light of this significant in-year underspend position projection, the report advised that a supplementary requisition discount of £15,000 per constituent authority was proposed for 2023/24 resulting in an under-recovery of budgeted requisition income of £120,000 and the consequential projected outturn position and impact on uncommitted reserves was detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

During consideration of this item, the Convener referred to the briefing note by the Director of Regional Economic Growth, Glasgow City Region issued to members prior to the meeting relative to a revised governance structure for the oversight of the development of a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the Glasgow City Region (GCR).

The Director of Regional Economic Growth then spoke to the briefing note which provided detail on the background and the growth of City Regions; the governance review; the proposed way forward; local democratic accountability for the new RSS; staffing and the budget.

The Director referred to the proposed way forward detailed in his briefing note which was: that a Glasgow City Region Spatial Planning Committee be established as a sub-committee of the Glasgow City Region Cabinet; that membership consist of Planning Conveners or equivalent from each of the local authorities; that the chair be decided by its membership; that this Committee would oversee the development of a RSS for the GCR for approval by the eight member authorities; and that the Directors/Heads of Service with responsibility for Planning of each Council would attend meetings in support of members.

The Director further advised that a report on this matter would firstly be considered by the Glasgow City Region Chief Executive's Group on 1 February 2024 and then by the Glasgow City Region Cabinet in February 2024. Following this, a report would require to be considered by all eight member authorities proposing (i) that Clydeplan be wound up; (ii) that a new Spatial Planning Committee be established; and (iii) that the requirement for the agreement of all members be formalised before an RSS could be presented to Cabinet.

Following discussions around membership and the governance arrangements of any newly formed Committee it was noted that a report relative to the decision taken by the Glasgow City Region Cabinet in February 2024 would be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Committee on 11 March 2024.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the revenue budget monitoring report be noted;
- (b) That the supplementary discount proposed in the report be approved; and
- (c) That the proposal detailed in the briefing note by the Director of Regional Economic Growth, Glasgow City Region be agreed and that it be noted that the decision taken by the Glasgow City Region Cabinet in February 2024 would be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Committee to be held on 11 March 2024.

3 Revenue Estimates 2024/25 for Clydeplan and the Green Network Partnership

There was submitted a joint report by the Treasurer and the Head of Economy & Development Services, Renfrewshire Council relative to the Revenue Estimates of the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority (Clydeplan) and the Green Network Partnership, including the requisition of the constituent authorities for financial year 2024/25, as detailed in the appendix to the report.

The report advised that the Minute of Agreement required the Treasurer to submit a financial plan to the Joint Committee setting out estimated expenditure and associated requisitions for the following three years. In light of current potential governance changes the report requested that the Joint Committee agree to waive this requirement for the current year.

The report further advised that the Revenue Estimates presented in Appendix 1 to the report included requisition discounts resulting in a 36% reduction in the net requisition for 2024/25.

The report provided information on the assumptions that the budget had been based on, a financial overview for Clydeplan and reserves.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Revenue Estimates for 2024/25, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, including the planned use of reserves be approved; and

(b) That the requirement for a three-year financial plan be waived in 2023/24.

4 Date of Next Meeting

DECIDED: That it be noted that the next meeting of the Joint Committee would be held at 11.15 am on 11 March 2024 and it be agreed that it be a hybrid meeting in the Council Chamber, Renfrewshire Council, Renfrewshire House, Paisley.

GLASGOW AND THE CLYDE VALLEY STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY JOINT COMMITTEE

To: Joint Committee

On: 11 March 2024

Report by: The Treasurer and the Head of Economy and Development

Heading: Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to 02 February 2024

1. Summary

- 1.1 The forecast position for Clydeplan by 31 March 2024 is a projected underspend of £51k, as explained on Appendix 1.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider and note the report.
-

3. Budget Adjustments

- 3.1 There have been no budget adjustments since the start of the financial year.
-

4. Budget Performance

Projected Year-end Position	£51k Favourable
<i>Previously Reported</i>	<i>£174k Favourable</i>

- 4.1 Appendix 1 below shows a projected underspend in Employee Costs of £257k. While the recently agreed pay award for local government staff has now been factored into the forecast, this is offset by vacancies, including one Strategic Planner post and two management posts, where the working assumption is that these posts will not be filled in this financial year.

This forecast underspend is partially offset by overspends in Supplies and Services, mainly due to an increase in audit fees and computer maintenance costs, as well as Transfer Payments relating to the funding of a Green Network Partnership Development Officer post, previously approved by the Joint

Committee. The result is an overall projected underspend compared to budget for 2023/24 of £51k.

- 4.1 In light of this significant in-year underspend projection generated mainly by the vacant posts, a supplementary requisition discount of £15k per constituent authority for 2023/24 was approved by the Joint Committee at its meeting on 22 January 2024. This results in an under-recovery of budgeted requisition income of £120k, and the consequential projected outturn position and impact on uncommitted reserves is demonstrated in Appendix 1.

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24
1st April 2023 - 02 February 2024

JOINT COMMITTEE - GLASGOW & CLYDE VALLEY STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY

Core Operations	Approved Budget	Year to Date Actual	Projected Full Year Actual	Projected Full Year Variance (Adverse) / Favourable	P8 Period Projection	Movement in Projection Adverse / (Favourable)
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Employee Costs	493	195	236	257	236	0
Property Costs	20	2	19	1	21	(2)
Transport Costs	1	0	1	0	1	0
Supplies and Services	27	31	65	(37)	60	4
Transfer Payments	2	49	50	(48)	49	1
Support Costs	24	3	26	(2)	26	0
Gross Expenditure	567	280	396	171	393	3
Council Requisitions	(544)	(53)	(424)	(120)	(544)	120
Other Income	(3)	0	(3)	0	(3)	0
Gross Income	(547)	(53)	(427)	(120)	(547)	120
TRANSFER (TO)/FROM RESERVES	20	227	(31)	51	(154)	123

Summary of in-year Movement in Reserves		£000s
Opening Revenue Reserve at 1 April 2023		(389)
Budgeted Draw on Reserves		20
Projected Year-end variance		(51)
Closing Revenue Reserve at 31 March 2024		(420)
% of Operating Income		98.3%

Employee Costs: Includes direct employee costs such as salary costs, overtime and indirect employee costs such as training, recruitment advertising

Property Costs: Includes expenses directly related to the running of premises and land, eg rates, rents and leases, utilities, contract cleaning

Transport Costs: Includes all costs associated with the provision, hire or use of transport, including travelling allowances, taxi and car hire costs and staff mileage

Supplies and Services: Includes all supplies and service expenses, such as ICT costs, and administrative costs such as stationery, postages, printing and advertising

Transfer Payments: Includes costs of payments for which no good or services are received in return e.g. Apprenticeship Levy

Support Costs: Includes central support charges e.g. Renfrewshire Council SLA and telephony recharges ('Administration Costs' in approved budget)

**GLASGOW AND THE CLYDE VALLEY STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
AUTHORITY JOINT COMMITTEE**

To: Joint Committee

On: 11 March 2024

Report by: The Treasurer

Heading: Annual Audit Plan 2023/24

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Annual Audit Plan 2023/24 is presented to the Joint Committee for information, and is prepared by the appointed external auditor, Azets. It outlines their timescales and planned audit activity during the audit of the 2023/24 annual accounts.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Joint Committee:
- a) Notes the Annual Audit Plan 2023/24 by Azets, as attached; and
 - b) Approves the proposed audit fee of £5,540.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 Based on its analysis of the risks facing Clydeplan, Azets has submitted an Audit Plan that outlines its approach to the audit of the 2023/24 annual accounts. This will assess whether the accounts provide a true and fair view of the organisation's financial position, and also whether they have been prepared in accordance with proper accounting practice, i.e. the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2023/24.
- 3.2 The Audit Plan outlines the responsibilities of Clydeplan and of Azets; its assessment of key challenges and risks, and the approach and timetable for completion of the audit.

- 3.3 The statutory deadline for the approval of the audited accounts for 2023/24 is 30 September 2024 and the annual audit report is planned to be reported to the Joint Committee on 9 September 2024.
- 3.4 On pages 20-21 of the Audit Plan, the proposed audit fee is detailed. This is indicated at £5,540 for the current financial year (£5,780 in 2022/23).
- 3.5 From Azets, Senior Manager, Adrian Kolodziej will be in attendance at the meeting to present the Audit Plan, attached here as an appendix.

Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority

External Audit Annual Plan

Year ended 31 March 2024

March 2024



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Introduction

Purpose

This audit plan highlights the key elements of our proposed audit strategy and provides an overview of the planned scope and timing of the statutory external audit of Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority (“Clydeplan”) for the year ended 31 March 2024 for those charged with governance.

Our audit work will cover:

- the financial statements within the 2023/24 annual accounts
- the wider scope of public audit
- any other work requested by Audit Scotland.

Adding value through the audit

All of our clients demand of us a positive contribution to meeting their ever-changing business needs. Our aim is to add value to Clydeplan through our external audit work by being constructive and forward looking, by identifying areas of improvement and by recommending and encouraging good practice. In this way, we aim to help Clydeplan promote improved standards of governance, better management and decision making and more effective use of resources.

Feedback

If there are any elements of this audit plan to which you do not agree or you would like to discuss, please let us know as soon as possible.

Any comments you may have on the service we provide, the quality of our work, and our reports would be greatly appreciated at any time. Comments can be reported directly to any member of your audit team.

This plan has been prepared for the sole use of those charged with governance and management and should not be relied upon by third parties. No responsibility is assumed by Azets Audit Services to third parties.

Openness and transparency

This report will be published on Audit Scotland’s website <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/>

Audit scope and general approach

Responsibilities of the auditor and Clydeplan

The [Code of Audit Practice](#) outlines the responsibilities of external auditors appointed by the Accounts Commission for Scotland and it is a condition of our appointment that we follow it.

Auditor responsibilities are derived from statute, International Standards on Auditing (UK) and the Ethical Standard for auditors, other professional requirements and best practice, the Code of Audit Practice and guidance from Audit Scotland.

Clydeplan has primary responsibility for ensuring the proper financial stewardship of its public funds. This includes preparing a set of annual accounts that are in accordance with proper accounting practices. Clydeplan is also responsible for complying with legislation and putting arrangements in place for governance and propriety that enable it to successfully deliver its objectives.

[Appendix 2](#) provides further details of our respective responsibilities.

Risk-based audit approach

We follow a risk-based approach to the audit that reflects our overall assessment of the relevant risks that apply to Clydeplan. This ensures that our audit focuses on the areas of highest risk. Our audit planning is based on:

Discussions with senior officers	Our understanding of the sector, its key priorities and risks	Attending & observing the Joint Committee
Guidance from Audit Scotland	Discussions with Audit Scotland and public sector auditors	Discussions with internal audit and review of plans and reports
Review of Clydeplan's corporate strategies and plans	Review of Clydeplan's corporate risk register	Consideration of the work of other inspection bodies

Planning is a continuous process and our audit plans are updated during the course of our audit to take account of developments as they arise.

Communication with those charged with governance

Auditing standards require us to make certain communications throughout the audit to those charged with governance. These communications will be made through Clydeplan.

Partnership working

We coordinate our work with Audit Scotland, internal audit, other external auditors and relevant scrutiny bodies, recognising the increasing integration of service delivery and partnership working within the public sector.

Audit Scotland

Although we are independent of Audit Scotland and are responsible for forming our own views and opinions, we do work closely with Audit Scotland throughout the audit. This helps identify common priorities and risks, treat issues consistently across the sector, and improve audit quality and efficiency. We share information about identified risks, good practices and barriers to improvement so that lessons to be learnt and knowledge of what works can be disseminated to all relevant bodies.

Audit Scotland undertakes national performance audits on issues affecting the public sector. We may review Clydeplan's arrangements for taking action on any issues reported in the national performance reports which have a local impact. We also consider the extent to which Clydeplan use the national performance reports as a means to help improve performance at the local level.

During the year we may also be required to provide information to Audit Scotland to support the national performance audits.

Internal Audit

As part of our audit, we consider the scope and nature of internal audit work and look to minimise duplication of effort, to ensure the total audit resource to Clydeplan is used as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Service organisations

Renfrewshire Council ("the Council") is the lead administrative authority for Clydeplan, providing Treasurer and committee Clerk roles, as well as other service support, such as payroll, ICT, legal and HR. Where those services (and associated systems) have a material impact on the annual accounts we will work with the Council to understand the controls in place over the systems used in delivering these services.

Delivering the audit

Hybrid audit approach

We adopt a hybrid approach to our audit which combines on-site visits with remote working; learning from the better practices developed during the pandemic.

All of our people have the equipment, technology and systems to allow them to work remotely or on-site, including secure access to all necessary data and information.

All of our staff are fully contactable by email, phone call and video-conferencing.

Meetings can be held over Microsoft Teams or by telephone.

We employ greater use of technology to examine evidence, but only where we have assessed both the sufficiency and appropriateness of the audit evidence produced.

Secure sharing of information

We use a cloud-based file sharing service that enables users to easily and securely exchange documents and provides a single repository for audit evidence.

Regular contact

During the 'fieldwork' phases of our audit, we will arrange regular catch-ups with key personnel to discuss the progress of the audit. The frequency of these meetings will be discussed and agreed with management.

Signing annual accounts

Audit Scotland recommends the electronic signing of annual accounts and uses a system called DocuSign.

Electronic signatures simplify the process of signing the accounts and can be signed using any device from any location. There is no longer a need for duplicate copies to be signed, thus reducing the risk of missing a signature and all signatories have immediate access to a high-quality PDF version of the accounts.

Approach to audit of the financial statements

Our objective when performing an audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement and to issue an independent auditor's report that includes our auditor's opinion.

As part of our risk-based audit approach, we will:

- perform risk assessment procedures including updating our understanding of Clydeplan, including its environment, the financial reporting framework and its system of internal control;
- review the design and implementation of key internal controls;

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, at the financial statement level and the assertion level for classes of transaction, account balances and disclosures;
- design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, to obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion; and
- exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit recognising that circumstances may exist that cause the financial statements to be materially misstated.

Materiality

“Reasonable assurance” is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. We include an explanation in the auditor’s report of the extent to which the audit was capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, and respective responsibilities for prevention and detection of fraud.

We apply the concept of materiality in planning and performing the audit, and in evaluating the effect of misstatements within the financial statements identified during the audit.

Judgments about materiality are made in the light of surrounding circumstances and are affected by our perception of the financial information needs of users of the financial statements, and by the size or nature of a misstatement, or a combination of both. The basis for our assessment of materiality for the year is set out in [Appendix 1](#).

Any identified errors greater than £550 will be recorded and discussed with those charged with governance and, if not adjusted, confirmed as immaterial as part of Clydeplan’s letter of representation to us.

Accounting systems and internal controls

We will follow a substantive testing approach to gain audit assurance rather than relying on tests of controls. As part of our work, we consider certain internal controls relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such that we are able to design appropriate audit procedures. However, this work will not cover all internal controls and is not designed for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal controls. If we identify significant deficiencies in controls, we will report these to Clydeplan.

Specialised skill or knowledge required to complete the audit

Our audit team will consult internally with our Technology Risk team in assessing the information technology general controls (ITGC).

Going concern

In most public sector entities (including Clydeplan), the financial reporting framework envisages that the going concern basis for accounting will apply where the entity's services will continue to be delivered by the public sector. In such cases, a material uncertainty related to going concern is unlikely to exist.

For many public sector entities, the financial sustainability of the entity is more likely to be of significant public interest than the application of the going concern basis. Our wider scope audit work considers the financial sustainability of Clydeplan.

We note that Clydeplan's current operations, structure and long-term financial arrangements are currently under review by the Joint Committee and its constituent authorities, which brings a level of uncertainty to the short and medium-term outlook. However, there is a 2-year notice period for changes to be implemented and as such does not pose an immediate risk to Clydeplan's ability to continue as a going concern.

Prevention and detection of fraud or error

In order to discharge our responsibilities regarding fraud and irregularity we require any fraud or irregularity issues to be reported to us as they arise. In particular we require to be notified of all frauds which:

- involve the misappropriation of theft of assets or cash which are facilitated by weaknesses in internal control
- are over £5,000.

We also require a historic record of instances of fraud or irregularity to be maintained and a summary to be made available to us after each year end.

Anti-money laundering

We require Clydeplan to notify us on a timely basis of any suspected instances of money laundering so that we can inform Audit Scotland who will determine the necessary course of action.

Wider audit scope work

The special accountabilities that attach to the conduct of public business, and the use of public money, mean that public sector audits must be planned and undertaken from a wider perspective than in the private sector. This means providing

assurance, not only on the financial statements, but providing audit judgements and conclusions on the appropriateness, effectiveness and impact of corporate governance and performance management arrangements and financial sustainability. [Appendix 1](#) provides detail of the wider scope areas of public sector audit work.

The Code of Audit Practice addresses a more limited audit of wider-scope areas for any public bodies that are less complex owing to their size and limited financial activity (referred to as Less Complex Bodies).

We have concluded, based on an assessment of the nature and circumstances of Clydeplan, that a limited wider scope audit is appropriate. As such our audit of wider scope areas is restricted to an evaluation of financial sustainability.

National risk assessment

Where particular areas of national or sectoral risk have been identified by the Auditor General, they will request auditors to consider and report on those risks as they apply at a local level. For 2023/24 no such risks have been specified.

Best Value

Appointed auditors have a duty to be satisfied that local government bodies have made proper arrangements to secure best value. We undertake this duty in a way that is proportionate to the size and type of body. We give due regard to:

- How Clydeplan demonstrates that it is meeting its Best Value responsibilities
- How our work on financial sustainability meets the Best Value responsibilities.

We will report on Clydeplan's arrangements for meeting its Best Value responsibilities in our Annual Audit Report.

Reporting our findings

At the conclusion of the audit we will issue:

- an independent auditor's report setting out our formal audit opinions within the annual accounts
- an annual audit report describing our audit findings, conclusions on key audit risks, judgements on the pace and depth of improvement on our audit of wider scope areas and any recommendations.

Definitions

We will use the following gradings to provide an overall assessment of the arrangements in place as they relate to the wider scope areas. The text provides a guide to the key criteria we use in the assessment, although not all of the criteria may exist in every case.



Financial statements - significant audit risks

Significant risks are risks that require special audit consideration and include identified risks of material misstatement that:

- our risk assessment procedures have identified as being close to the upper range of the spectrum of inherent risk due to their nature and a combination of the likelihood and potential magnitude of misstatement; or
- are required to be treated as significant risks due to requirements of ISAs (UK), for example in relation to management override of internal controls.

Significant risks at the financial statement level

The table below summarises significant risks of material misstatement identified at the financial statement level. These risks are considered to have a pervasive impact on the financial statements as a whole and potentially affect many assertions for classes of transaction, account balances and disclosures.

Management override of controls	Audit approach
<p>Auditing Standards require auditors to treat management override of controls as a significant risk on all audits. This is because management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud by manipulating accounting records and overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively.</p> <p>Although the level of risk of management override of controls will vary from entity to entity, the risk is nevertheless present in all entities. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur, it is a risk of material misstatement due to fraud and thus a significant risk.</p> <p>Specific areas of potential risk include manual journals, management estimates and judgements and one-off</p>	<p>Procedures performed to mitigate risks of material misstatement in this area will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documenting our understanding of the journals posting process and evaluating the design effectiveness of management controls over journals. • Analysing the journals listing and determining the criteria for selecting high risk and/or unusual journals. • Testing high risk and/or unusual journals posted during the year and after the draft accounts stage back to supporting documentation for appropriateness, corroboration and to ensure approval has been undertaken in line with Clydeplan's journals policy.

Management override of controls	Audit approach
<p>transactions outside the ordinary course of the business.</p> <p>Risk of material misstatement: Very High</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining an understanding of the key accounting estimates and critical judgements made by management. We will challenge assumptions and consider for reasonableness and indicators of bias which could result in material misstatement due to fraud. • Evaluating the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions.

Significant risks at the assertion level for classes of transaction, account balances and disclosures

Fraud in revenue recognition	Audit approach
<p>Material misstatement due to fraudulent financial reporting relating to revenue recognition is a presumed risk in ISA 240 (The Auditor's Responsibilities Relating to Fraud in an Audit of Financial Statements).</p> <p>The presumption is that Clydeplan could adopt accounting policies or recognise income in such a way as to lead to a material misstatement in the reported financial position.</p> <p>Given the financial pressures facing the public sector as a whole, there is an inherent fraud risk associated with the recording of income around the year end.</p> <p>However, we do not deem this risk to be present in requisitions received from the constituent local authorities due to a lack of incentive and opportunity to manipulate transactions. We also rebut this risk in relation to other income as it is not material to the accounts.</p>	<p>We have rebutted this risk as we have assessed there is low incentive or opportunity to manipulate requisition transactions.</p>

Fraud in non-pay expenditure	Audit approach
<p>As most public sector bodies are net expenditure bodies, the risk of fraud is more likely to occur in expenditure. There is a risk that expenditure may be misstated resulting in a material misstatement in the financial statements.</p> <p>Given the financial pressures facing the public sector as a whole, there is an inherent fraud risk associated with the recording of expenditure around the year end.</p> <p>Inherent risk of material misstatement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-pay expenditure (occurrence/completeness): High • Accruals (existence/completeness): High 	<p>We will perform the procedures outlined below based on their value within the financial statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating the significant non-pay expenditure streams and reviewing the controls in place over accounting for expenditure. • Consideration of Clydeplan's key areas of expenditure and obtaining evidence that expenditure is recorded in line with appropriate accounting policies and the policies have been applied consistently across the year. • Reviewing accruals around the year end to consider if there is any indication of understatement of balances held through consideration of accounting estimates.

Pension asset / liability (key accounting estimate)	Audit approach
<p>An actuarial estimate of the pension fund asset/liability is calculated on an annual basis under IAS 19 and on a triennial funding basis by an independent firm of actuaries with specialist knowledge and experience. The estimates are based on the most up to date membership data held by Clydeplan and have regard to local factors such as mortality rates and expected pay rises with other assumptions around inflation when calculating the liabilities.</p> <p>A significant level of estimation is required in order to determine the valuation of pension assets/liabilities. Small changes in the key assumptions (including discount rates, inflation, and mortality rates) can have a material impact on the pension asset/liability.</p> <p>There is a risk that the assumptions used are not appropriate.</p> <p>Inherent risk of material misstatement:</p> <p>Pension (valuation): High</p>	<p>Procedures performed to mitigate risks of material misstatement in this area will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the controls in place to ensure that the data provided to the actuary is complete and accurate. • Considering the reasonableness of the assumptions used in the calculation against other local government pension fund actuaries and other observable data. • Agreeing the disclosures in the financial statements to information provided by the actuary.

The wider scope of public audit

Introduction

As described previously, the Code of Audit Practice frames a significant part of our audit responsibilities. Following consideration of the size, nature and risks of Clydeplan, the application of the full wider scope audit is judged by us not to be appropriate. Our annual audit work will therefore be restricted to an evaluation of financial sustainability.

Our planned audit work is risk based and proportionate. Our initial assessment builds upon our understanding of Clydeplan' key priorities and risks along with discussions with management and review of Joint Committee minutes and key strategy documents.

We have identified one significant risk in relation to financial sustainability as set out in the table below.

Audit planning is a continuous process and we will report all identified significant risks, as they relate to our wider scope audit, in our annual audit report.

Wider scope significant risks

Financial sustainability

In January 2024 Clydeplan considered its revenue budget for 2024/25.

At the end of the current financial (2023/24) year Clydeplan is estimating to have a total reserve of £423k which represents circa 75% of the net expenditure or 78% of the requisition funding in the year. The key cost driver is staff expenditure which is expected to decrease over the period of the estimate due to Staff vacancies. The local authorities' gross requisitions in 2024/25 are expected not to change, however discounts have been applied to reflect the reduced cost arising from the vacant positions.

There is a level uncertainty in the above estimates due to indirect dependence on the Scottish Government annual allocation of funding to local authorities who in turn fund Clydeplan activities through their requisitions. The funding levels from the Scottish Government beyond 2024/25 are uncertain and impacted by wider economic factors in Scotland.

It is also noted that Clydeplan's current operations, structure and long-term financial arrangements are currently under review by the Joint Committee and its constituent authorities, which brings a level of uncertainty to the short and medium-term outlook.

Our audit response:

We will review Clydeplan's arrangements for managing its financial position. Our work will include an assessment of progress made in developing financially sustainable plans which support the delivery of Clydeplan's statutory functions and strategic objectives.

Audit team and timetable

Audit Team

Our audit team will be as follows:

Role	Name	Email
Engagement Lead	Gary Devlin	Gary.Devlin@azets.co.uk
Engagement Manager	Adrian Kolodziej	Adrian.Kolodziej@azets.co.uk

Timetable

Please find below confirmation of our proposed timetable for the audit as previously discussed with management:

Audit work/output	Target month/s
Audit planning meeting	18 January 2024
Joint Committee to consider audit plan	11 March 2024
Receipt of draft accounts and commencement audit fieldwork	July 2024
Independent auditor's report	September 2024
Annual Report to the Joint Committee and the Controller of Audit	09 September 2024

Our requirements

The audit process is underpinned by effective project management to co-ordinate and apply our resources efficiently to meet your deadlines. It is essential that the audit team and Clydeplan's finance team work closely together to achieve the above timetable.

In order for us to be able to complete our work in line with the agreed fee and timetable, we require the following:

- Draft financial statements of a good quality by the deadlines agreed with management.

- Good quality working papers at the same time as the draft financial statements. These will be discussed with you in advance to ensure clarity over our expectations
- Ensuring staff are available and on site (as agreed) during the period of the audit
- Prompt and adequate responses to audit queries.

Audit fee

The quality of audit work is an essential requirement in successfully delivering a fully compliant ISA and Code of Audit Practice audit. Audit Scotland sets an expected audit fee that assumes the body has sound governance arrangements in place, has been operating effectively throughout the year, prepares comprehensive and accurate unaudited accounts and meets the agreed timetable for audit.

The expected fee is reviewed by Audit Scotland each year, based on Audit Scotland's overall budget proposals. The budget proposal and fee levels (for the 2023/24 audits) have been developed in the context of a challenging economic environment, increased expectations on the audit profession and the ongoing process of recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The 2023/24 expected audit fee is based on applying a 6% increase to the 2022/23 expected audit fee. This increase is applied on a sector basis and reflects the conditions of the public sector market.

As auditors we negotiate a fee with Clydeplan during the planning process. The fee may be varied above the expected fee level to reflect the circumstances and local risks within the body.

We propose setting the 2023/24 audit fee at £5,540, which equates to a 4% decrease on the 2022/23 fee. We have increased the auditor remuneration element of the audit fee by 10% to reflect the level of work we consider is required in response to the key audit matters identified in this plan.

Fee element	2023/24	2022/23
Auditor remuneration	£20,400	£19,800
Pooled costs	£680	0
Audit support costs	0	£660
Sectoral cap adjustment	£(15,540)	£(14,680)
Total fee	£5,540	£5,780

We will take account of the risk exposure of Clydeplan and the management assurances in place. We assume receipt of the draft working papers at the outset of our on-site final audit visit. If the draft accounts and papers are late, or agreed management assurances are unavailable, we reserve the right to charge an additional fee for additional audit work. An additional fee will be required in relation to any other significant exercises not within our planned audit activity.

Audit independence and objectivity

Auditor independence

We are required to communicate on a timely basis all facts and matters that may have a bearing on our independence.

In particular, FRC's Ethical Standard stipulates that where an auditor undertakes non audit work, appropriate safeguards must be applied to reduce or eliminate any threats to independence.

Azets has not been appointed to provide any non-audit services during the year. We confirm that we comply with FRC's Ethical Standard. In our professional judgement, the audit process is independent and our objectivity has not been compromised in any way. In particular there are and have been no relationships between Azets and Clydeplan, its Joint Committee members and senior management that may reasonably be thought to bear on our objectivity and independence.

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Appendix 1: Materiality

Whilst our audit procedures are designed to identify misstatements which are material to our audit opinion, we also report to those charged with governance and management any uncorrected misstatements of lower value errors to the extent that our audit identifies these.

Under ISA (UK) 260 we are obliged to report uncorrected omissions or misstatements other than those which are 'clearly trivial' to those charged with governance. ISA (UK) 260 defines 'clearly trivial' as matters that are clearly inconsequential, whether taken individually or in aggregate and whether judged by any quantitative or qualitative criteria.

An omission or misstatement is regarded as material if it would reasonably influence the users of the financial statements. The assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement and is affected by our assessment of the risk profile of Clydeplan and the needs of the users.

When planning, we make judgements about the size of misstatements which we consider to be material, and which provide a basis for determining the nature and extent of our audit procedures. Materiality is revised as our audit progresses, should we become aware of any information that would have caused us to determine a different amount had we known about it during our planning.

Our assessment, at the planning stage, of materiality for the year ended 31 March 2024 was calculated as follows.

Materiality

	£
Overall materiality for the financial statements	11,000
Performance materiality (75% of materiality)	8,250
Trivial threshold (5% of materiality)	550

Materiality	Our initial assessment is based on approximately 2% of Clydeplan's gross expenditure as disclosed in the 2022/23 audited annual accounts. We consider this benchmark to be the principal consideration for the users of the annual accounts when assessing financial performance of Clydeplan.
Performance materiality	<p>Performance materiality is the working level of materiality used throughout the audit. We use performance materiality to determine the nature, timing and extent of audit procedures carried out. We perform audit procedures on all transactions, or groups of transactions, and balances that exceed our performance materiality. This means that we perform a greater level of testing on the areas deemed to be at significant risk of material misstatement.</p> <p>Performance materiality is set at a value less than overall materiality for the financial statements as a whole to reduce to an appropriately low level the probability that the aggregate of the uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceed overall materiality.</p>
Trivial misstatements	<p>Trivial misstatements are matters that are clearly inconsequential, whether taken individually or in aggregate and whether judged by any quantitative or qualitative criteria.</p> <p>Individual errors above this threshold are communicated to those charged with governance.</p>

The Remuneration Report and Related Parties disclosures are material by nature.

In performing our audit, we will consider any errors which cause result in a movement between the relevant bandings on the disclosure table to be material.

For related party transactions, in line with the standards we will consider the significance of the transaction with regard to both Clydeplan and the counter party, the smaller of which will drive materiality considerations on a transaction by transaction basis.

Appendix 2: Responsibilities of the Auditor and Clydeplan

The Accounts Commission, Controller of Audit and Audit Scotland

The Accounts Commission is an independent public body. Its members are appointed by Scottish Ministers and are responsible for holding local government to account.

Under statute, the Accounts Commission appoints a Controller of Audit to consider the results of the audit of accounts, including the wider-scope responsibilities and Best Value auditing. The Controller of Audit makes reports to the Accounts Commission on matters arising from the accounts and on Best Value and acts independently of the Accounts Commission when reporting to it.

Audit Scotland is an independent statutory body that co-ordinates and supports the delivery of high-quality public sector audit in Scotland. Audit Scotland oversees the appointment and performance of auditors, provides technical support, delivers performance audit and Best Value work programmes and undertakes financial audits of public bodies.

Auditor responsibilities

Code of Audit Practice

The Code of Audit Practice (the [2021 Code](#)) describes the high-level, principles-based purpose and scope of public audit in Scotland.

The Code of Audit Practice outlines the responsibilities of external auditors appointed by the Accounts Commission and it is a condition of our appointment that we follow it.

Our responsibilities

Auditor responsibilities are derived from the Code, statute, International Standards on Auditing (UK) and the Ethical Standard for auditors, other professional requirements and best practice, and guidance from Audit Scotland.

We are responsible for the audit of the accounts and the wider-scope responsibilities explained below. We act independently in carrying out our role and in exercising professional judgement. We report to Clydeplan and others, including Audit Scotland, on the results of our audit work.

Weaknesses or risks, including fraud and other irregularities, identified by auditors, are only those which come to our attention during our normal audit work in accordance with the Code and may not be all that exist.

Wider scope audit work

Reflecting the fact that public money is involved, public audit is planned and undertaken from a wider perspective than in the private sector.

The wider scope audit specified by the Code broadens the audit of the accounts to include additional aspects or risks in areas of financial management; financial sustainability; vision, leadership and governance; and use of resources to improve outcomes.

Financial management



Financial management means having sound budgetary processes. Audited bodies require to understand the financial environment and whether their internal controls are operating effectively.

Auditor considerations

Auditors consider whether the body has effective arrangements to secure sound financial management. This includes the strength of the financial management culture, accountability, and arrangements to prevent and detect fraud, error and other irregularities.

Financial sustainability



Financial sustainability means being able to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Auditor considerations

Auditors consider the extent to which audited bodies show regard to financial sustainability. They look ahead to the medium term (two to five years) and longer term (over five years) to consider whether the body is planning effectively so it can continue to deliver services.

Vision, leadership and governance

Audited bodies must have a clear vision and strategy and set priorities for improvement within this vision and strategy. They work together with partners and communities to improve outcomes and foster a culture of innovation.



Auditor considerations

Auditors consider the clarity of plans to implement the vision, strategy and priorities adopted by the leaders of the audited body. Auditors also consider the effectiveness of governance arrangements for delivery, including openness and transparency of decision-making; robustness of scrutiny and shared working arrangements; and reporting of decisions and outcomes, and financial and performance information.

Use of resources to improve outcomes

Audited bodies need to make best use of their resources to meet stated outcomes and improvement objectives, through effective planning and working with strategic partners and communities. This includes demonstrating economy, efficiency and effectiveness through the use of financial and other resources, and reporting performance against outcomes.



Auditor considerations

Auditors consider the clarity of arrangements in place to ensure that resources are deployed to improve strategic outcomes, meet the needs of service users taking account of inequalities, and deliver continuous improvement in priority services.

Limited wider scope audit work

The Code of Audit Practice provides for the Accounts Commission to specify an alternative audit approach where an audited body might be considered less complex due to its size and its limited financial activity.

We have concluded, based on an assessment of the nature and circumstances of Clydeplan, that a limited wider scope audit is appropriate. As such our audit of wider scope areas is restricted to an evaluation of financial sustainability.

Best value

Appointed auditors have a duty to be satisfied that local government bodies have made proper arrangements to secure best value. We undertake this duty in a way that is proportionate to the size and type of body. We give due regard to:

- How Clydeplan demonstrates that it is meeting its Best Value responsibilities
- How our work on financial sustainability meets the Best Value responsibilities.

Audit quality

The Auditor General and the Accounts Commission require assurance on the quality of public audit in Scotland through comprehensive audit quality arrangements that apply to all audit work and providers. These arrangements recognise the importance of audit quality to the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission and provide regular reporting on audit quality and performance.

Audit Scotland maintains and delivers an [Audit Quality Framework](#)

The most recent audit quality report can be found at [Quality of public audit in Scotland: Annual report 2022/23 | Audit Scotland \(audit-scotland.gov.uk\)](#)

ClydePlan responsibilities

Clydeplan has primary responsibility for ensuring the proper financial stewardship of its public funds, compliance with relevant legislation and establishing effective arrangements for governance, propriety and regularity that enables it to successfully deliver its objectives. The features of proper financial stewardship include the following:

Area	ClydePlan responsibilities
Corporate governance	<p>Clydeplan is responsible for establishing arrangements to ensure the proper conduct of its affairs including the legality of activities and transactions, and for monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements. Those charged with governance should be involved in monitoring these arrangements.</p>
Financial statements and related reports	<p>Clydeplan has responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the financial position and its expenditure and income, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and relevant legislation; • maintaining accounting records and working papers that have been prepared to an acceptable professional standard and support the balances and transactions in its financial statements and related disclosures;
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring the regularity of transactions, by putting in place systems of internal control to ensure that they are in accordance with the appropriate authority; and • preparing and publishing, along with the financial statements, an annual governance statement, management commentary (or equivalent) and a remuneration report in accordance with prescribed requirements. <p>Management commentaries should be fair, balanced and understandable. Management is responsible, with the oversight of those charged with governance, for communicating relevant information to users about the entity and its financial performance, including providing adequate disclosures in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework. The relevant information should be communicated clearly and concisely.</p>

Area	ClydePlan responsibilities
	<p>Clydeplan is responsible for developing and implementing effective systems of internal control as well as financial, operational and compliance controls. These systems should support the achievement of its objectives and safeguard and secure value for money from the public funds at its disposal. Clydeplan is also responsible for establishing effective and appropriate internal audit and risk-management functions.</p>
Standards of conduct for prevention and detection of fraud and error	<p>Clydeplan is responsible for establishing arrangements to prevent and detect fraud, error and irregularities, bribery and corruption and also to ensure that its affairs are managed in accordance with proper standards of conduct by putting proper arrangements in place.</p>
Financial position	<p>Clydeplan is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure the financial position is soundly based having regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • such financial monitoring and reporting arrangements as may be specified; • compliance with statutory financial requirements and achievement of financial targets; • balances and reserves, including strategies about levels and their future use; • plans to deal with uncertainty in the medium and long term; and • the impact of planned future policies and foreseeable developments on the financial position.
Best value	<p>Clydeplan has a specific responsibility to make arrangements to secure Best Value. Best Value is defined as continuous improvement in the performance of the body's functions. In securing Best Value, Clydeplan is required to maintain an appropriate balance among:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of its performance of its functions. • The cost to Clydeplan of that performance.

Area	ClydePlan responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The cost to persons of any service provided by it for them on a wholly or partly rechargeable basis. <p>In maintaining that balance, Clydeplan shall have regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Efficiency• Effectiveness• Economy• The need to meet the equal opportunity requirements. <p>Clydeplan should discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.</p>

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Glasgow City Region – City Deal

Cabinet

Report by Director of Regional Economic Growth

Contact: Kevin Rush (0141 287 4613)

Item

Regional Spatial Planning Arrangements

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this paper is to propose a revised governance structure for the oversight of the development of a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the Glasgow City Region (GCR) following the recommendation of the Clydeplan Joint Committee in June 2023 to transfer responsibility to the GCR Cabinet.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is asked to:

- Note the report;
- Agree to the establishment of a new Planning Sub-Committee with **approval** of a Regional Spatial Strategy resting with the individual Member Authorities; and
- Agree this approach through their own democratic structures at the earliest opportunity.

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Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to propose a revised governance structure for the oversight of the development of a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the Glasgow City Region (GCR) following the recommendation of the Clydeplan Joint Committee in June 2023 to transfer responsibility to the GCR Cabinet.
2. The proposal requires endorsement from the GCR Cabinet and the 8 constituent Member Authorities prior to implementation.

Background and the growth of City Regions

3. Increasingly the role of city regions, through the establishment of City Deals and Regional Economic Partnerships, are emerging as the key mechanism for the delivery on a number of important agendas including: economic development, City Deals, climate change, environmental improvement and strategic planning.
4. In this context the new duty to prepare a Regional Spatial Strategy is key in planning for the future development of the Glasgow City Region.
5. Since 1996 the eight Glasgow City Region local authorities have worked together to develop a series of regional spatial plans, the most recent being the Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan ("SDP"), which was approved by Scottish Ministers in July 2017.
6. The previous SDP set out a Vision and Spatial Development Strategy from now until 2036, suggesting where new development should be located and a policy framework that helps deliver sustainable economic growth through the creation of high quality development which seeks to reduce inequalities and enhances the quality of life in Glasgow City Region. The SDP also set the strategy and policy context for the individual local authority Local Development Plans.
7. This is no longer extant since the introduction of NPF4, and has been replaced by the requirement to prepare an RSS.
8. Since 2022, the City Region has seen a very significant increase in responsibility and budget devolved to it from both UK and Scottish Governments. This includes a number of programmes which have clear spatial planning elements to them. New programmes now managed through the GCR PMO and overseen by Cabinet include:

Date of Award	Programme	Amount
February 2022	Innovation Accelerator	£33m
August 2022	UK Shared Prosperity Fund	£74m
June 2023	Clyde Mission	£26.5m
June 2023	Investment Zone	£160m
November 2023	5G Innovation Region	£3.2m

9. Given this, a new Head of Place has been appointed to oversee the spatial planning elements of the GCR Programme, including Clyde Mission, the development of a Clyde Masterplan and the Investment Zone. Ross Nimmo, currently Head of Planning and Development at Glasgow Airport, will take up this post on 4th March 2024.

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10. There are clear synergies between this exciting new body of work and the development of a Regional Spatial Strategy, and the opportunity to merge teams and governance could generate significant opportunities and efficiencies for the Region.

Governance Review

11. The Clydeplan Joint Committee has previously agreed that work should be undertaken to explore the future governance arrangements for the performance of the functions undertaken by the Joint Committee particularly in relation to the new duty on local authorities in relation to strategic planning as part of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, namely to prepare a Regional Spatial Strategy.
12. Unlike the current Strategic Development Plan the Regional Spatial Strategy will not form part of the statutory Development Plan which will now comprise the National Planning Framework and the Local Development Plan.
13. Given these changes it was acknowledged that the role and remit for which the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority Joint Committee was originally established will significantly change and therefore the future role of the Committee required to be reviewed.
14. Following the vote at its June 2023 meeting on a report on future arrangements, the Joint Committee agreed to recommend the following option:

***(a) That the contents of the report be noted;
(b) That the cessation of strategic development plans be noted; and
(c) That the preferred option for considering regional spatial strategy planning issues going forward be that existing Clydeplan staff resource be reviewed in light of the new requirements for RSS preparation. Staff would be consulted on a possible TUPE transfer to Glasgow City Council. If transferred, the team would be integrated into the existing city region structures (overseen by the Regional Director) who would take responsibility for preparing an RSS and reporting this through to the GCR Cabinet for approval. This would move the duty to prepare an RSS directly into the city region governance structures.***

15. It should be noted that the individual Member Authorities need to take their own decisions on how they wish to proceed with the development of Regional Spatial Strategies and the Joint Committee's recommendation.
16. Since the June 2023 recommendation, two Councils have expressed views on the future arrangements:
 - In September 2023, Renfrewshire Council approved the following motion:

“This Council notes the decision of the GCVSDPA (Clydeplan) Joint Committee to recommend passing responsibility for the new Regional Spatial Strategy to the Glasgow City Region Cabinet, however this Council considers it premature to do so at this juncture as no guidance has been issued to date as to the development of the RSS or the governance agreed between the constituent authorities.

The staff of the GCVSDPA (who are Renfrewshire Council employees) are greatly valued for their skills and knowledge in this rapidly changing planning

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environment and should be fully supported and involved in any proposed changes.

The Joint Committee has successfully operated as a directly accountable governance structure to all 8 local authorities regarding regional planning. This council believes that the same principle should apply regarding the development of the new Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS). For it to be equally successful it must be founded in democratically accountable governance structures which encourages neighbouring authorities to collaborate and agree on any strategies that may have an influence on their own local planning policies.

Council therefore agrees that the Joint Committee should continue until alternative suitable democratically accountable governance structures are identified, agreed and approved by all constituent authorities for its replacement with responsibility for delivering the new Regional Spatial Strategy”

- In December 2023, North Lanarkshire Council voted to formally withdraw from the existing Joint Committee and will serve its two year notice from 31st March 2024.

17. It is therefore clear that a sustainable future arrangement needs to be found which satisfies the desire for democratically accountable governance, generates efficiencies, develops a mutually agreed Regional Spatial Strategy and delivers on the new programmes devolved to regional level.

Proposed way forward

18. Recognising that consensus will always be sought, the proposal is based on three fundamental principles:
 - A collaborative approach to regional spatial planning with all members being equal;
 - Integration with wider regional activity to maximise impact; and, fundamentally
 - The need for local democratic accountability with no local authority being bound by any decision they cannot support

Ensuring local democratic accountability for the new Regional Spatial Strategy

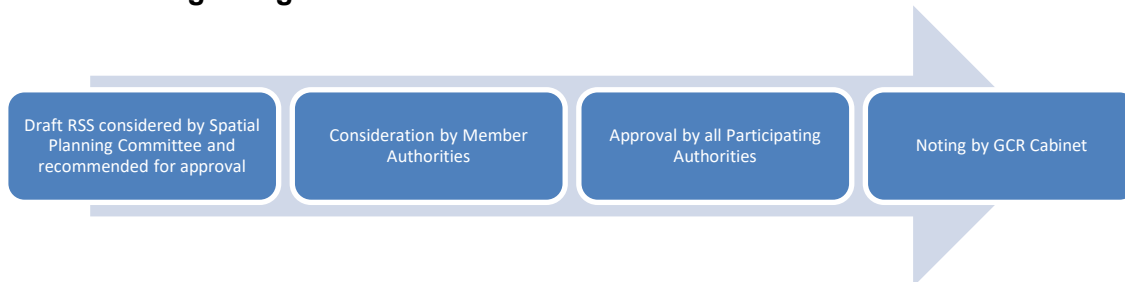
19. To secure local democratic accountability for the new Regional Spatial Strategy it is proposed that a Glasgow City Region Spatial Planning Committee is established as a sub-committee of the Glasgow City Region Cabinet, which is a Joint Committee established under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. Membership will consist of Planning Conveners or equivalent from each of the local authorities. The Chair will be decided by its membership. This Committee will oversee the development of a Regional Spatial Strategy for the Glasgow City Region for approval by the 8 Member Authorities. The Directors /Heads of Service with responsibility for Planning of each council will attend meetings in support of members.
20. This is the model used for the Education Collaborative which has been in operation since 2017.

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21. The Spatial Planning Committee would not have decision making powers and would only make recommendations on the Regional Spatial Strategy for consideration by the 8 Member Authorities to ensure local democratic accountability.
22. Ideally, all 8 Member Authorities would participate in an agreed Regional Spatial Strategy, but this would be a matter for each Council to decide and it is within the gift of any of the members to choose not to support the final strategy.
23. The Cabinet would receive and note the Regional Spatial Strategy but only after **approval** by all participating Member Authorities through their local democratic structures. This is similar to the approach undertaken for recent regional initiatives such as the Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan and no RSS could be presented to Cabinet without prior approval from its constituent members.
24. All efforts will be managed to agree consensus amongst the 8 members but a Regional Spatial Strategy is not a statutory document and therefore, no local authority could be bound to adopt an RSS without approval through their own democratic structures. The individual authorities retain the right not to support or be bound by anything contained within the RSS.
25. This approach was discussed at the Clydeplan Joint Committee meeting on 22nd January 2024 and there was widespread support for the approach, subject to necessary approvals being sought.

Process for agreeing new RSS



Staffing

26. The Spatial Planning Committee would replace the existing Clydeplan Joint Committee and it is anticipated that staff and budgets would transfer into the existing City Region structures, ensuring a more streamlined approach to audit, finance etc. with no requirement for separate arrangements. Following appropriate consultation, the current Clydeplan and Green Network Partnership team would transfer to Glasgow City Council under TUPE regulations (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006) and be based within the City Region PMO section where appropriate management arrangements will be put in place and resilience and support will be available. The new Head of Place would oversee the transfer and be responsible for developing the Regional Spatial Strategy for consideration by members.
27. If this approach was agreed, a paper would need to be taken through all 8 Member Authorities agreeing to the windup of Clydeplan, the establishment of a new Spatial Planning Committee and formalising the requirement for the agreement of all members before an RSS could be presented to Cabinet.

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28. This process would run over the next few months subject to all authorities reaching agreement and due trade union/staff consultation. It is likely that revised governance arrangements may take longer to embed but staffing transfers could progress more quickly.

Budget

29. The transfer of responsibility and staff to the GCR PMO is likely to generate efficiencies for the Member Authorities, with no requirement for separate office accommodation or IT costs. In addition, the GCR PMO has been effective in generating external funding from both Scottish and UK Governments in recent years for spatial planning related activity, including Clyde Mission and Investment Zone, and it is expected that this will reduce the burden on Member Authorities in future years.

Recommendation

30. Cabinet is asked to:

- Note the report;
- Agree to the establishment of a new Planning Sub-Committee with **approval** of a Regional Spatial Strategy resting with the individual Member Authorities; and
- Agree this approach through their own democratic structures at the earliest opportunity.