

Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

10.00 am, Tuesday, 4 August 2015

Eurocities AGM and Conference

Item number	7.9
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	City Wide

Executive summary

This report proposes Council representation at the Eurocities AGM and Conference and Eurocities Awards ceremony in Copenhagen and Malmo on 4-6 November 2015. The theme of the Eurocities 2015 conference is 'Living Cities – Sustainable Growth and Quality of Life' and will focus on exploring new ways of promoting sustainable economic growth, creating jobs and improving quality of life for citizens. Two Edinburgh projects have been shortlisted for the Eurocities 2015 Awards. It is proposed that an elected member attend, with officer support from External Relations and the shortlisted project service areas.

Links

Coalition pledges	P15, P16, P47, P49 and P50
Council outcomes	CO18, CO22, CO25, and CO26
Single Outcome Agreement	SO1 and SO2

EUROCITIES AGM and Conference

Recommendations

- 1.1 To approve attendance by an elected member representative at the Eurocities AGM and Conference in Copenhagen and Malmo in November 2015.
- 1.2 To note that further information on the benefits of attendance will be provided after the event.

Background

- 2.1 This report proposes Council representation at the Eurocities AGM and Conference in Copenhagen and Malmo on 4-6 November 2015.
- 2.2 Eurocities is the network of major European cities, bringing together the local governments of 170 cities that between them govern 130 million citizens across 35 European countries. Edinburgh has been a member since 1991 and a number of Edinburgh's twin and partner cities are also members.

Main report

- 3.1 The Eurocities AGM is the key annual decision making meeting of the association. It provides a forum for debate and the formation of future priorities and strategy, as well as electing the President, Vice-President and Executive Committee members of the association. This year's AGM and Conference is taking place in Copenhagen and Malmo from 4-6 November.
- 3.2 Eurocities provides member cities with a platform to exchange knowledge, experiences and compare different approaches through a variety of policy forums, working groups, projects and events. The network provides a strong voice for cities, allowing dialogue with the European institutions on EU legislation, policies and programmes that impact on their citizens, services and territories. The network is active across a wide range of urban policy issues and challenges including: economic development, provision of public services, environment, knowledge society, transport, employment, education, social affairs and culture.

- 3.3 Membership of Eurocities offers the following benefits:
- a channel for influencing policies, legislation and funding programmes;
 - intelligence on funding opportunities and policy development from the European Commission, particularly on urban policy;
 - an efficient partner search forum for transnational EU funding bids and the design of successful joint projects;
 - opportunities to exchange good practice and improve benchmarking for city government;
 - opportunities to raise the international profile of the city.
- 3.4 The theme of the Eurocities 2015 conference is 'Living Cities – sustainable growth and quality of life'. It will include a private political session and roundtable debates for Eurocities political representatives to discuss key challenges facing city administrations including air quality, employment, investment and urban mobility.
- 3.5 The winners of the Eurocities Awards 2015 will be announced at an awards ceremony on 4 November during the annual meeting. Two Edinburgh entries submitted by the Council - the Edinburgh Guarantee and 'Edinburgh in Bloom' initiatives - have been successful in reaching the shortlist. Both projects will be showcased in films screened at the awards ceremony. Representatives of shortlisted projects are also invited to lead speed-networking sessions aimed at promoting best practice and knowledge exchange, city-to-city contacts and collaborative project development.
- 3.6 Council representation at the AGM and Conference will provide opportunities to:
- influence Eurocities' future priorities and work programme;
 - share experience and good practice with other European cities;
 - promote the city and the expertise available in Edinburgh;
 - connect with other European cities for future EU bid development and joint activities.
- 3.8 It is proposed that an elected member attend this year's annual meeting supported by an officer from the External Relations team, along with appropriate service representation from the 'Edinburgh Guarantee' and 'Edinburgh in Bloom' projects.

Measures of success

- 4.1 As there are no specific Capital Coalition Pledges and Council Outcomes for External Relations, the team monitors its contribution to a wide range of related pledges and outcomes. Examples for this current report are given in the Links section below.
- 4.2 Further information on the benefits of attendance will be provided after the event.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The costs of attendance depend on the time of booking. Estimated costs per person are in the region of £500 for travel and accommodation plus 280 euro conference registration fee (approximately £200).
- 5.2 Costs for elected member attendance will be met from the Economic Development budget 2015/16. Officer representation will be met from the relevant service area budgets 2015/16. As a nominated city for the Eurocities Awards the Council is entitled to two free registration places for representatives of the shortlisted projects at the conference.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The actions and outputs described in this report adhere to the risk compliance policy and governance arrangements. In addition the recommendations in the report do not impact on any existing policies of the Council.

Equalities impact

- 8.1 There are no equalities impacts arising from attendance at this conference. The Council's European and International Strategy and Parliamentary activity supports the Council's commitment to equal opportunities.

Sustainability impact

- 8.2 Travel arrangements have been made in accordance with the Council's Sustainable Travel Plan. Travel options have been considered and the recommendation is a direct return flight from Edinburgh to Copenhagen. While there are adverse impacts on air quality and noise associated with air travel, overland travel is not considered practical given the distance and excessive travel time. A direct return flight to Copenhagen offers best value, has no

additional requirement for overnight accommodation above the minimum requirement, and is the most time effective.

- 8.3 The actions arising from this report will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh in terms of drawing on EU funds and sharing international good practice in service delivery and city development. The theme of the conference relates to Sustainable Edinburgh 2020 priorities and the Council's Sustainable Energy Action Plan.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Membership of Eurocities provides the Council with a channel for engaging in consultation on EU policy, legislative and funding proposals.

Background reading / external references

Eurocities AGM website: www.eurocities2015.kk.dk

Eurocities website: www.eurocities.eu

Papers held by External Relations Unit

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Links

Coalition pledges	P15 - Work with public organisations, the private sector and social enterprise to promote Edinburgh to investors P16 - Examine ways to source new funding to support small businesses P47 – Set up a city-wide Transport Forum of experts and citizens to consider our modern transport needs P49 – Continue to increase recycling levels across the city and reducing the proportion of waste going to landfill P50 – Meet greenhouse gas targets, including the national target of 42% by 2020
Council outcomes	CO18 – Green – we reduce the local environmental impact of our consumption and production CO22 – Moving efficiently – Edinburgh has a transport system that

improves connectivity and is green, healthy and accessible

CO25 – The Council has efficient and effective services that deliver on objectives

CO26 - The Council engages with stakeholders and works in partnership to improve services and deliver on agreed objectives

Single Outcome Agreement

SO1- Edinburgh's economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all

SO2 – Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health

Appendices