

# Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 4 December 2018

## Eurocities: Cities4Europe Declaration

Item number	8.7
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All

### Executive summary

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The Eurocities network invited all member cities to engage with its 'Cities4Europe' programme. The Committee agreed to this at its meeting in [February 2018](#) and has subsequently engaged in the initiative. As an outcome of this initiative member cities were asked to sign a 'Declaration by Eurocities' during the Eurocities 2018 Conference which took place 28-30 November 2018.

Committee is asked to note the decision by the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Leader and Depute Leader of the Council for the Council Leader to sign the Declaration during the Conference.

## Eurocities: Cities4Europe Declaration

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 The Committee is asked to note the decision by the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Council Leader and Depute Leader, to sign the attached Declaration on Citizen Engagement during the Eurocities 2018 Conference in Edinburgh.

### 2. Background

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#### **Eurocities Network**

- 2.1 Eurocities is the primary membership network of European Cities and Edinburgh has been a member for almost 30 years. The Eurocities 2018 AGM and Conference took place in Edinburgh from 28 – 30 November 2018, following a successful bid by Edinburgh to host the event on the theme of 'Creative Competitive Cities', with an agreed youth ambassador programme linked to Scotland's Year of Young People 2018.

#### **Cities4Europe**

- 2.2 Details of the Cities4Europe initiative were reported to the Committee in February 2018. Essentially the initiative is aimed at citizen outreach and citizen engagement across Europe, delivered through cities' local democratic processes and participatory decision-making. As noted in the February report, the conclusions of the initiative formed a significant part of the agenda of the political meetings during the Eurocities Conference in Edinburgh in November.

### Main report

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#### **Eurocities AGM and Conference November 2018**

- 3.1 The agenda for the Eurocities' AGM and Conference was influenced by a number of key developments, which, given the local and global themes and challenges addressed, remain relevant to both EU and non-EU member cities.
- 3.2 The City of Edinburgh Council has engaged in the [Cities4Europe](#) initiative by creating a Young Ambassador programme during the conference. This included

My Kind of Edinburgh, Desire Lines and the City Vision as citizen consultations relevant to shaping cities.

### **Eurocities Declaration on Citizens Engagement**

- 3.3 As part of the Cities4Europe activity and in advance of the conference starting the Leader of City of Edinburgh Council was asked, alongside leaders from the other participating cities, to sign a declaration on Citizens Engagement. The Declaration is attached in appendix 1.
- 3.4 Due to the lateness of this request and under section four of the Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Functions, the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Council Leader and Deputy Leader, confirmed that City of Edinburgh Council would sign this declaration during the conference.

## **4. Measures of success**

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- 4.1 The hosting of the Eurocities Conference and AGM is a significant undertaking for Edinburgh. The value from the event to the city has been maximised by the Council's and partners' input to the technical and political content during the planning of the conference. This ensures that the city is showcased, that a relevant platform is created for international exchange of good practice and partnership, and that legacy projects are identified and secured, particularly for young people.

## **5. Financial impact**

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- 5.1 Funding for the hosting of the conference comes from delegate fees, partner contributions and sponsorship opportunities while funding for activities aligned to the Cities4Europe initiative has been met from existing Council budgets and/or partner contributions.
- 5.2 There are no costs associated with the signing of this declaration.

## **6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 There are no risk, policy, compliance or governance impacts arising from the signing of this declaration and recommendations in the report do not impact on any existing policies of the Council.

## **7. Equalities Impact**

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- 7.1 There are no equalities impacts arising from the above activities. The Council's International Strategy and Eurocities engagement plan supports the Council's commitment to equal opportunities.

## 8. Sustainability impact

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- 8.1 The theme of sustainable cities is a key element of the Cities4Europe initiative, and the City of Edinburgh Council's contributions to the initiative via the City Vision, My Kind of Edinburgh and Desire Lines.

## 9. Consultation and engagement

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- 9.1 The Council undertakes international activity in partnership with a wide range of partners in the city on a consultative basis. This includes a Team Edinburgh/Team Scotland approach linking closely to the Consular Corps, the Scottish Government, the Parliament, the city's investor and business base, the Higher Education Sectors, Festivals Edinburgh and Marketing Edinburgh.
- 9.2 Membership of Eurocities provides the Council with a channel for engaging across a range of service areas.

## 10. Background reading / external references

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- 10.1 Background information held in Economic Development.
- 10.2 [Eurocities](#) website.
- 10.3 [Education, Children and Families Committee: Year of Young People](#) (item 7.20).
- 10.4 [Cities4Europe](#).

### Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

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## 11. Appendices

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Appendix 1 – Eurocities Declaration on Citizens Engagement



# EUROCITIES DECLARATION ON CITIZENS ENGAGEMENT

We, EUROCITIES mayors, are firm believers in European cooperation. We have, together with all levels of government in the EU, a challenge to retain trust, legitimacy and relevance towards our citizens. There is an increasing mismatch between people's expectations and what can be done to tackle our most pressing challenges, causing an expanding distance between political institutions and citizens.

City leaders can provide a critical link with citizens. We know from our everyday experience that democracy requires participation, innovation and imagination. Cities have been experimenting and innovating with new forms of participatory democracy, to support traditional representative democracy. Cities can and must lead

the way towards a more citizen focused European society. Representative democracy must be enhanced with participative mechanisms to respond to pressing public concerns such as climate change, social cohesion, housing and employment.

Our campaign 'Cities4Europe - Europe for citizens' promotes a Europe where people come first. This requires more mutual trust, active participation and a constant dialogue. It is essential to better involve citizens in decision making and implementation at all levels of government, and to reinforce the important role that local governments should play in a multilevel governance structure.

**We, mayors and leaders of EUROCITIES, therefore commit to strengthening citizens engagement by:**

» **involving our citizens in a dialogue about our common future**

Continuously working closely with citizens and civil society is key to addressing our problems and to reinforcing trust in and ownership of public policies. We already see a strong civic and societal engagement locally, and our 'Cities4Europe - Europe for citizens' campaign showed how working directly with citizens can help in developing better urban and European solutions.

» **inspiring all levels of government to build societies where people come first**

As the level of government closest to citizens, cities are testing new ways of working with them, including new forms of deliberative democracy. With national governments and the European Union in need of better tools for listening to and engaging with its citizens, cities must be at the forefront of participatory approaches and inspire all levels of government.

» **making a positive impact on the way decisions are taken in Europe**

Working with cities is an opportunity for Europe to reconnect with its citizens and, therefore, to successfully tackle today's challenges. To make the most of our opportunities, we need to work together across all levels of government and with our citizens.

**As local authorities, we are committed to developing a more positive future for Europe, and to providing a positive contribution towards the construction of a more citizen focused Europe.**

Edinburgh, 29 November 2018

Daniël Termont

mayor of Ghent  
EUROCITIES president

Anna König Jerlmyr

mayor of Stockholm  
EUROCITIES vice president

Adam McVey

leader of the city of Edinburgh council

