

Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Elected Member Oversight Committee

10 am, Friday 19 February 2021

Regional Growth Framework Update

Item number 3.3

Executive Summary

This paper provides an update on the development of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Regional Growth Framework, and progress since the previous meeting of the Elected Member Oversight Committee on 15 January 2021.

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Regional Growth Framework Update

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Members of the Oversight Committee are invited to note progress to date and proposed next steps.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Regional Growth Framework is a document that articulates the long-term aspirational goals for Edinburgh and South East Scotland and guides the future direction of economic and wider policy across stakeholders. It seeks to set an ambitious 20-year vision for the region, up until 2040.
- 2.2 Non-statutory in nature, it is a public statement of aligned vision, ambition and priorities for South East Scotland, seeking to influence and be influenced by plans and strategies developed at national, regional and local levels.

3. Main report

- 3.1 At the previous meeting of the Oversight Committee, an overview of the Framework process to date was provided. It was agreed that the Programme Management Office would put in place a work programme to outline the process for the development of the Framework and that a further progress update would be provided to the February meeting of the Oversight Committee.
- 3.2 Since the last meeting, further work has been undertaken to develop and agree the Framework structure and content. Previous work had been undertaken to develop an outline structure this has been updated again over recent months, based on the outputs from workshop sessions, publication of Government Policy, and further research. As a result, a revised structure has been developed and is outlined as Appendix 1. This has been considered and endorsed by the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Directors Group. Some further initial work on drafting early sections is underway and work in progress is also attached for information as Appendix 2.
- 3.3 Further work is also underway in terms of updating the proposed timescale for the production of the Framework. This will include the key stages of finalising a consultative draft of the document (seeking endorsement from the City Region Deal partners), the process and timescale for the wider consultation, and the timescale for seeking approval of a final document. An update on the timescale will be provided to the next Oversight Committee meeting.

4. Financial impact

4.1 No financial impact at this stage

5. Alignment with Sustainable, Inclusive Growth Ambitions

5.1 The proposed Framework will be closely aligned to the existing sustainable, inclusive growth ambitions of all City Deal partners

6. Background reading/external references

6.1 None

7. Appendices

7.1 Regional Growth Framework – Proposed Draft Structure

7.2 Regional Growth Framework - Initial Draft (Work in Progress)

Appendix 1

Regional Growth Framework – proposed Draft Structure

1. Who has developed this strategy and what is it for?

- The Edinburgh and South East Scotland Local Authorities, working with the,
- Regional Enterprise Council, as well as,
- Key regional/national stakeholders, in order to
- Guide regional decision making and long-term planning.
- The overall aim is to improve sustainable economic performance/recovery across the region.

2. Why are we working together in this way?

- To date, regional planning has been through the South East Scotland Transport Partnership and SESplan (the Strategic Development Planning Authority for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland)
- Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal has changed the way the region worked together. We came together to agree key deliverable programmes and plans, and there is now a strong commitment to working together to build towards shared outcomes
- Interdependencies across the region are increasingly recognised, particularly across labour markets and travel to work areas
- There is a shared understanding that the region has been the powerhouse of the Scottish economy, and that in Data Driven Innovation, we have a Unique Selling Point to build around

3. Edinburgh and South East Scotland Pre-Covid: where were we?

- The City of Edinburgh performing strongly, even 'over heating' in some ways,
- House prices in the city increasingly unaffordable leading to trend for expansion of a number of key settlements across the region, with in-commuting being a common pattern, putting pressure on infrastructure
- Stubborn pockets of economic under performance in both urban and rural parts of the region
- A variety of locations and assets with significant economic potential but with infrastructure investment requirements.
- A diverse, though rather 'U shaped' economy, with many entry level jobs, and many highly skilled, although transition across and between, limited.
- Strong Higher Education Institutes with increasing economic impact
- High performing Further Education Institutes, though with insufficient flexibility to support new economic patterns
- A cultural powerhouse of global stature
- Recent and upcoming infrastructure investment (Borders Rail etc) which has shown the potential for sustainable investment

4. Impact of Covid on the Region

- Possibly hit the region harder than many others because of the volume of jobs in retail, hospitality and tourism.
- As elsewhere, shone a spotlight on health and wider inequalities
- Exacerbated the economic divide between those who can adapt to new ways of working and those who can't
- Put at risk (for the medium term) many existing business models, in transport, culture and hospitality in particular
- Shown the region to be a centre of global expertise in Public Health
- Shown the power and effectiveness of community action projects, right across the region
- Shared determination to plan for a future that builds on our strengths, and tackles challenges head on

5. Our vision for the future

- Vital importance of natural, cultural, built and community assets
- Determined to create a more equal economy and society
- Determined to address the climate challenge
- An international, brilliantly connected, outward looking city-region
- We were the cradle of the enlightenment, the nation's capital, the driver of the Scottish economy - we will adapt to lead the way once more in addressing the challenges of the 21st century

6. How the region works

- key economic/labour market stats
- key demographic stats
- key infrastructure
- key sectors and institutions
- key assets

7. Our strategic building blocks

- Flourishing - fairer distribution of wealth; affordable access to housing; transition to carbon neutral that is just
- Adaptable – innovative physical and digital infrastructure; infrastructure that is multifunctional and climate-ready
- Smart – digital region that works for everyone; data-driven approaches support decision-making across all sectors

8. Our big moves

- Re-designing the economy: Data Driven Innovation - maximising the impact of the city region deal, building data capability across firms, sectors, schools, infrastructure and communities;
- Re-building communities (both new and existing): addressing affordability and connectivity within 20 min neighbourhoods, and re-thinking our High Streets, in

both a city centre and a town centre context, focusing on new roles and new uses;

- Reducing the need to travel, and increasing family support, through new approaches to employment and working patterns ('working near home');
- Rethinking mobility and transport, making us the city region with the lowest car dependency in Scotland, but the best and most integrated connectivity locally, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- Regenerating the Forth estuary: from Rosyth to Cockenzie, taking in the Forth Bridges and Granton, linking to Grangemouth/Forth Valley;
- Re-imagining sustainable tourism: regionally and nationally connected, with sustainable assets and attractions across the region;
- Re-building support for business: to focus on good growth and a new wave of entrepreneurialism, with a strong focus on green businesses;
- Re-designing the new skills system; focused on emerging sectors and technologies;
- Re-inventing healthcare: One Health, focused around the Bio Quarter, Easterbush, etc working with the NHS Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships;
- And, lastly, maximising the role of anchor institutions in the public, private and third sectors so that our amazing institutions create lasting benefit in the communities and areas they are home to.

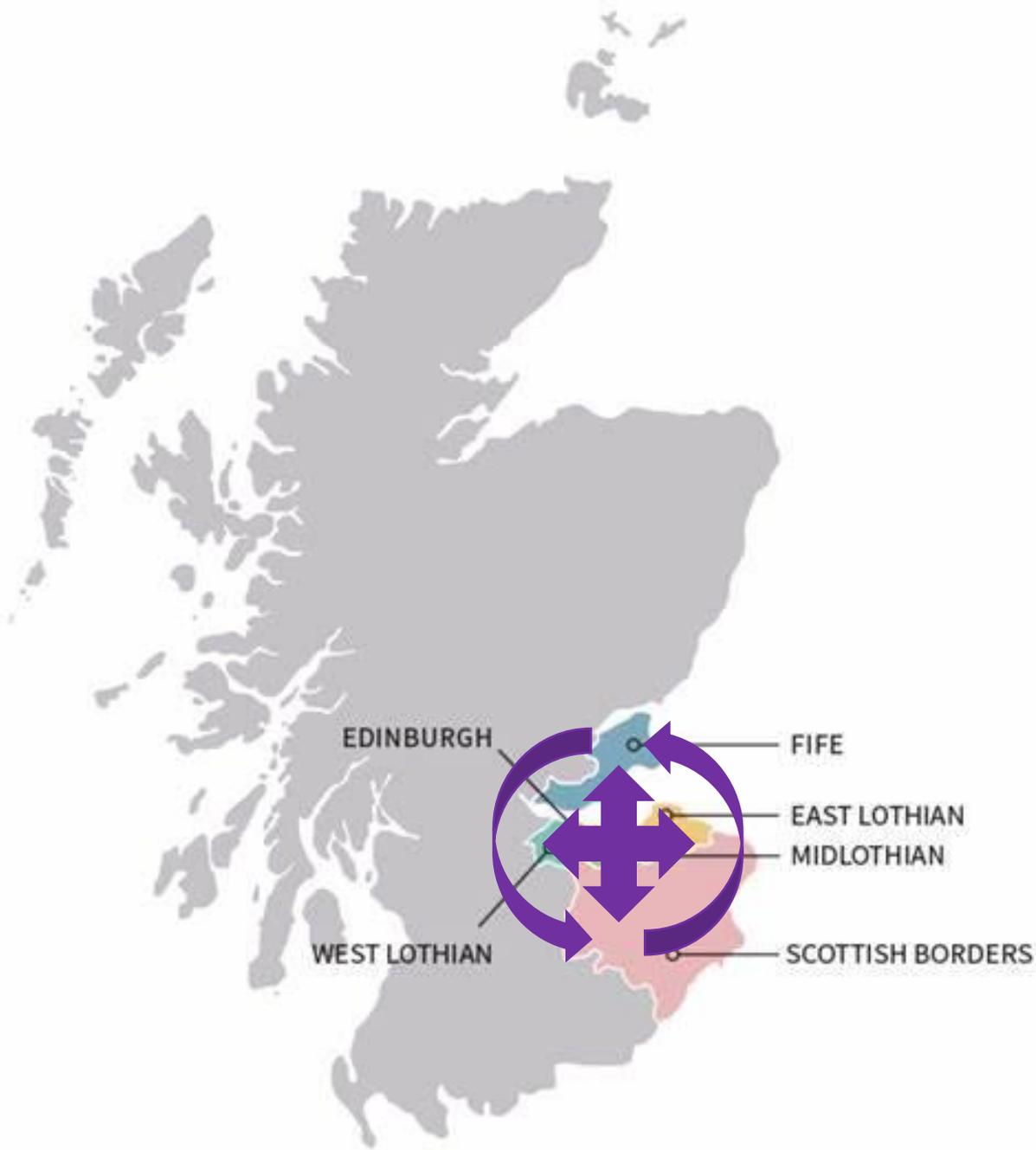
9. Our approach to delivery

- years 1-3
- years 4-6
- years 7-10

10. Overseeing change - the role of the Joint Committee, the Elected Member Oversight Committee, and the Regional Enterprise Committee. Also something powerful to close on commitment to joint working and invitation to others (national agencies in particular) to share our vision.

APPENDIX 2 – Regional Growth Framework Draft (work in progress)

Edinburgh and South East Scotland
Regional Growth Framework (2021 – 2040)
OUTLINE DRAFT – FEBRUARY 2021



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EDINBURGH & SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND – REGIONAL GROWTH FRAMEWORK

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Who has developed the Regional Growth Framework and what is it for?

The Regional Growth Framework is a document that articulates the long-term aspirational goals for Edinburgh and South East Scotland and **guides the future direction** of economic and wider policy across stakeholders. It seeks to set an ambitious **20-year vision** for the region, up until 2040.

Non-statutory in nature, it is a **public statement of aligned vision, ambition and priorities** for South East Scotland, seeking to influence and be influenced by plans and strategies developed at national, regional and local levels.

Building on the successful Council led partnership that is delivering the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal, the Framework is more ambitious and broader Regional Partnership, developed with collective involvement of public, private and third sector organisations, it seeks to guide inform and influence future approaches, strategies and statutory policies across **sustainability, transport, planning, housing and economic development** to enable the region to generate and spread prosperity and enable a just transition to a low carbon economy. In doing so, it aims to ensure that the success of the region can continue to be realised and that the region continues to be the key driver of the Scottish economy. It seeks to identify how regional partners can build on the opportunities created by the City Region Deal to improve the way the region functions.

Recognising the significant changes that the region and Scotland as a whole face in the next few years and the degree of uncertainty around how and when these changes will impact, the Framework needs to be flexible and adaptable. As such, it will be subject to regular review and update over its lifetime.

Why are we working together in this way?

The Edinburgh and South East Scotland region, like other regions across Scotland is facing a period of unprecedented challenge and opportunity. To secure the best future for those who live, work, study and visit the area, it is even more essential that the public and private sector work together in a co-ordinated way to secure the regions well-being.

While recent years have seen the early benefits of joint working in areas such the City Region Deal, there is a recognition that much more can be achieved if different organisations agree common goals and work together to achieve these. This is now evident across Scotland and beyond where the development of regional partnerships, covering defined labour markets and travel to work areas, are delivering sustainable benefits for the areas that they cover.

Such a partnership, with a shared understanding of the significant contribution that the region can make to the Scottish economy, and recognising the unique opportunities that the region offers, has the potential to make a clear positive difference.

Edinburgh and South East Scotland Pre-Covid, where were we?

Economic Performance

The Edinburgh Economy was performing strongly, with a level of growth that exceeded the Scotland average. Overall, the region was contributing approximately £36 billion per year to the Scottish and UK economies through its diverse economy.

But growth was not evenly spread with some parts of the region, especially the centre of Edinburgh, showing signs of over-heating in terms of demand for housing and office accommodation, whilst other areas struggled with stubborn pockets of economic under performance.

House prices, particularly in the city, were increasingly unaffordable. A number of key settlements across the region expanded in response, with in-commuting increasing, putting pressure on infrastructure. Recent and planned infrastructure investment (including Borders Rail Link) has shown the potential for sustainable solutions. Passenger numbers were rising, and economic activity and further investment was being seen around key nodes.

The distinctiveness of Edinburgh and South East Scotland created a cultural powerhouse of global stature. The culture, history and tourism offer of the region continued to draw visitors from across the world.

Labour Market & Skills

The region hosts world-class Universities and other Education Institutions, whose economic impact showed continual increase. The Further Education sector in the region was also strong, with high-performing institutions – though at times these lacked the flexibility to support new economic patterns.

For workers, the region’s labour market offered many entry-level jobs, and many highly skilled roles. But too often those in entry-level roles found themselves unable to progress to higher-skill and higher-wage opportunities, leading to sustained in-work poverty.

Possible infographics

	Some areas overheating, pockets of economic under-performance in other areas.
	House prices unaffordable in some areas.
	“Hourglass” labour market – diverse economy with many entry level jobs, and many highly skilled, but transition across and between limited.
	Strong HEIs with increasing economic impact. High performing FEIs, though with insufficient flexibility to support new economic patterns.

	<p>The city, and wider region, is a cultural powerhouse of global stature.</p>
	<p>Expansion of a number of key settlements across the region, with in-commuting being a common pattern, putting pressure on infrastructure. Recent and upcoming infrastructure investment (Borders Rail etc) has shown the potential for sustainable investment, but access to public transport is still an issue.</p>

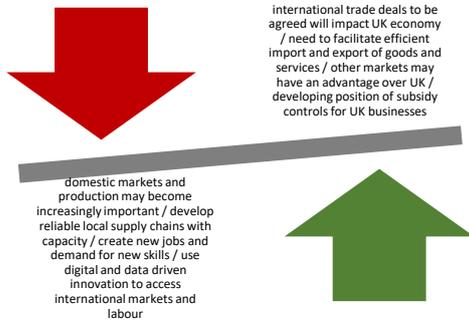
Impact of Covid & EU exit on the Region

The cumulative effects of Brexit and Covid will have economic, social and environment impacts on the Region and the wider Country, and these are outlined below:

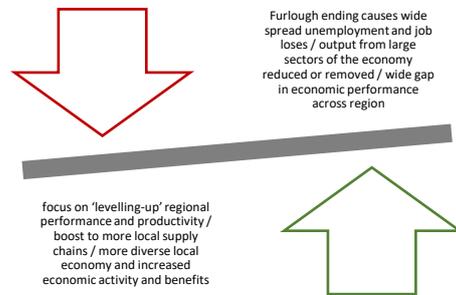
Scotland's future in the world (post Covid / Brexit)

Economic Considerations

Brexit

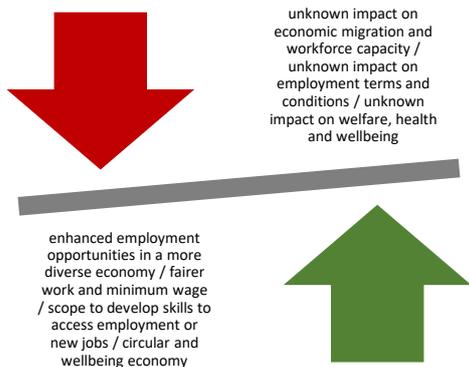


Covid-19 Response, Recovery & Renewal

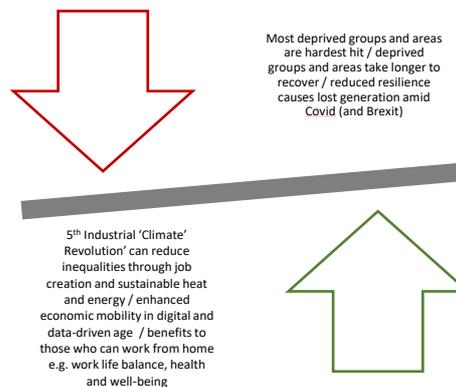


Social Considerations

Brexit



Covid-19 Response, Recovery & Renewal



Environmental Considerations

Brexit

Covid-19 Response, Recovery & Renewal



All of the above effects will have an impact on the future focus of this Strategic Framework. In addition, there are a series of immediate challenges including recovering from the impact of Covid on Scotland and the UK leaving the European Union need to be addressed in the short term.

The COVID-19 Global Pandemic has had wide-reaching economic, social and health impacts around the world. For the Edinburgh and South East Scotland, the impact on the economy has been significant because of the large number of people employed in tourism, travel, hospitality/food service, arts, culture and (non-food) retail. Health and economic inequalities that existed before the pandemic have not only made it more difficult for some households to cope with the effects of lockdowns and restrictions but have also been additional risk factors for COVID effects. The effectiveness of community action projects, right across the region, have provided strong support and helped to protect the most vulnerable in our society.

Many existing business models are under threat, not just as a result of the immediate restrictions, but in the medium-term as patterns of behaviour change. This particularly affects transport, culture and hospitality/food service. An economic divide between those individuals who can adapt to new ways of working, or move into new roles, and those who cannot, will develop and widen, unless support is put in place. Young people entering the labour market for the first time will face new challenges – their education has been significantly disrupted and employers too are facing uncertainty which may affect hiring decisions.

The region's global health expertise has delivered a significant contribution to the COVID response nationally and internationally. Moving forward, the region has a shared determination to plan for a future that builds on our strengths and tackles the challenges we face head-on.

Possible infographics

	<p>Possibly hit this region harder than others because of the volume of jobs in hospitality, tourism and retail. Put at risk (for the medium term) many existing business models, in transport, culture and hospitality in particular</p>
	<p>As elsewhere, shone a spotlight on health and wider inequalities</p>

	<p>Exacerbated the economic divide between those who can adapt to new ways of working and those who can't</p>
	<p>Shown the region to be a centre of global expertise in Public Health</p>
	<p>Shown the power and effectiveness of community action projects, right across the region</p>
	<p>Shared determination to plan for a future that builds on our strengths, and tackles challenges head on</p>

What is Our Core Economic Scenario in a Post Brexit and Covid World?

1. **Internationalisation & domestic strength** - strong economic recovery and on-going performance based on strong international trade deals, supporting appropriate in-migration, with high international and domestic demand for our products and services, with enhanced productivity and diversity in our economy, business base and workforce
2. **Building stronger foundations for our future** – Steady and then faster growth based on strengthening our internal markets and local supply chains to meet more domestic demand from our own products and services to re-orientate, diversify and strengthen our economy, business base and work force while supporting appropriate in-migration and meeting growing international demand for our products and services
3. **Missed Opportunities & Expectations** – we struggle to adapt to new international trading and migration arrangements and our economy falters in the face of unpredictable international and domestic demand for our products and services and our supply chains cannot adapt or respond quickly enough which limits our productivity and ability to promote diversification of our business base, economy and workforce

Our vision for the future

Having reviewed the challenges and opportunities that the Region faces, the following section outlines our collective Vision for the Region, as well as the focus of activity. In doing so, it seeks to recognise the vital importance of the area's natural, cultural, built and community assets, our determination to create a more equal economy and society, address the climate challenge and help develop an international, brilliantly connected, outward looking city-region.

We were the cradle of the enlightenment, the nation's capital, the driver of the Scottish economy - we will adapt to lead the way once more in addressing the challenges of the 21st century

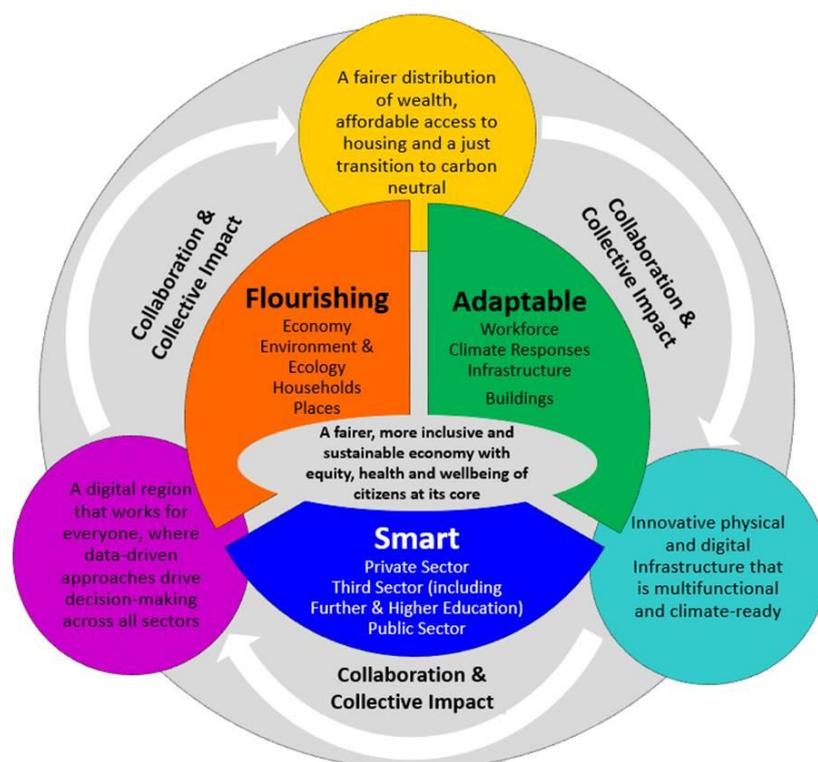
Our collective Vision for the Region is:

We will continue to drive the Scottish economy and successfully accommodate our growth to deliver a fairer and more inclusive distribution of wealth to all our communities. We will make best use of our existing assets to create resilient, flourishing and smart places to ensure that the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region delivers for all its citizens as we transition to a zero-carbon economy.

Delivering the Vision

A series of future regional priorities have been outlined below, these seek to maximise the opportunities which the Region offers, while addressing the challenges which it faces, both existing and as a result of Covid 19 and its impact.

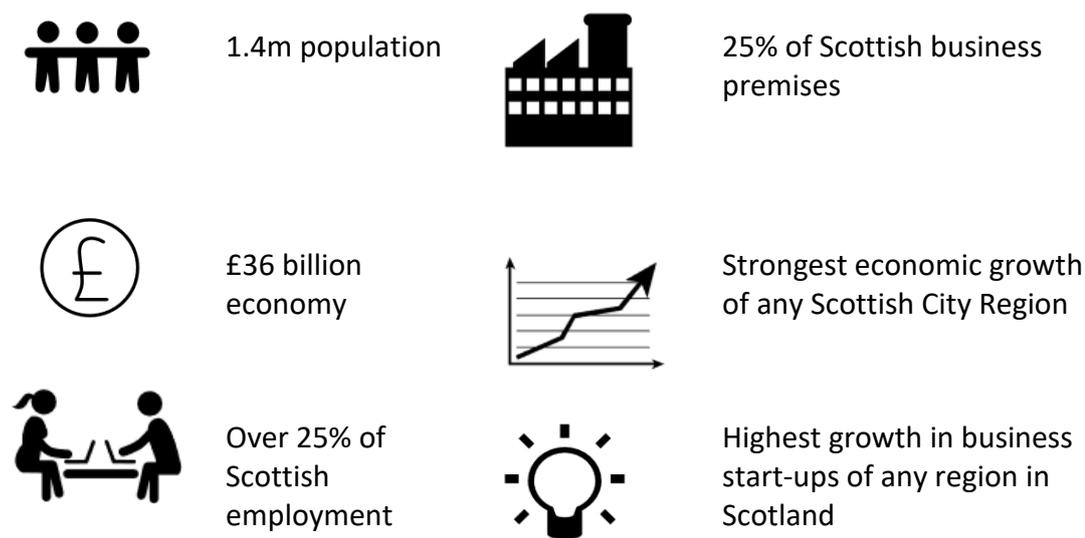
These are emerging priorities and will require further work, consideration and consultation as the RGF develops. These priorities fall broadly into three key thematic areas – **Adaptable, Flourishing and Smart**.



How the region works

To achieve our Vision will rely on building on the regions existing strengths. The following section highlights some the areas key economic and demographics, infrastructure, sectoral strengths and key assets.

Figure 1 – Edinburgh and South East Scotland – Key Figures



Demographics

The area is home to around a quarter (1.364 million people) (25.3%) of Scotland's population. However, the region has a higher proportion of working age residents (those aged 16-65) and, as such, represents 25.5% of Scotland's working age population.

Existing City Region Deal

Within the existing City Region Deal, there is recognition of the economic opportunities and challenges which the area faces in the years ahead. These included:

- Slow growth
- Regional disparities in job densities
- Skills inequality and polarisation
- Gender and age inequalities
- Housing, transport and connectivity issues

However, the City Region Deal projects alone cannot address longstanding, deep-rooted issues facing the region and more action and intervention is required to accommodate growth and enable it to transition to a low carbon economy, particularly in the context of the UK Exiting the EU and Covid-19 recovery and renewal. The Growth Framework will seek to co-ordinate the collective efforts of Partners to address these significant and compounding opportunities and challenges, which include:

- The need to assert the region a global centre of excellent for is current and emerging key sectors
- A just transition to a zero-carbon economy - The region is currently considering how best to deliver a just transition to a zero-carbon future. This can only be achieved through collective ambition, investment and resources;

- Need to support the recovery of sectors hardest hit by the pandemic – tourism / assembly and leisure / cultural and creative industries etc
- Skills and re-training and deployment into future growth sectors (low and zero carbon and green recovery);
- Support for business, including SMEs and entrepreneurial activity
- The success and prosperity in the region is not experienced by all;
- Need to address disparities in job density across the region;
- Too many people are unable to move on from low wage and low skill jobs;
- There are pockets of multiple deprivation;
- Nearly a fifth of our children live in poverty;
- Housing need and demand is outstripping supply, especially affordable housing. Increasing the supply and accelerating the delivery of homes across all tenures is critical to accommodate growth and ensure that the region remains an attractive place to live, work and invest.
- Within the regional core, the commercial and residential markets are overheating. Whilst there is brownfield land that can be redeveloped here, the developable opportunities are limited;
- Lack of connectivity and affordable public transport options both within and across boundaries particularly in many of our rural areas leaving communities disconnected from places of work and opportunity. Also, the lack of widespread superfast broadband across the region is leaving some more remote communities and individuals disadvantaged. This does provide an opportunity as many transfer to home working, accessing jobs and reducing need for travel;
- In Edinburgh, 45% of the workforce commutes to work by car with significant traffic congestion experienced on all major routes into the city impacting productivity, air quality and the environment;
- Need to make places more self-contained and consider 20 minute neighbourhood and more local and / or digital access to services and facilities, including outreach and pop-up
- Supporting communities – welfare / circular economy

Our strategic building blocks

Theme 1 – Flourishing

We want to spread the benefits and prosperity more evenly around the region in the future will ensure that inclusive growth is achieved. Technological and climate change is transforming the types of skills requirements and job opportunities available and how companies do business. It is vital that people in the region have the skillsets required to work in key sectors. Future opportunities include:

- Delivering the 21,000 jobs that the City Region Deal projects will bring and helping our most disadvantaged communities have the skills and ability to access these opportunities.
- The City Region Deal Integrated Regional Employability and Skills (IRES) Programme will provide part of the support required to help people in the region adapt to these changes.
- Maximising community benefits from the City Region Deal and future collaboration projects can deliver economic opportunities linked to areas of disadvantage.
- Distribution of key sectors and jobs and assets - building on the region's core sectoral strengths which include tourism, agri-tech, life sciences, data science, tech, finance, fintech, creative industries, food & drink, renewables/energy, manufacturing, warehouse and distribution.
- Supporting our town centres and existing key sectors including retail, health care, hospitality and more.
- Growing export value and the number of exporters. Consider economic opportunities at a regional scale e.g. future warehouse, distribution, industrial and retail uses, and how those organisations maximise their global reach.

Theme 2 - Smart

The region has the ambition of becoming the Data Capital of Europe, ensuring that communities across the region benefit from data driven innovation.

Data is critical to future economic growth, social change, and public services, the region has ambitious plans to establish the City Region as the Data Capital of Europe. The City Region is home to the £1bn+ businesses FanDuel and Skyscanner, and major international tech companies such as Amazon, Cisco, Oracle, Microsoft and IBM have also created bases in the City Region. In terms of academic and research capability, the University of Edinburgh has been ranked first in the UK for computer science and informatics research and Heriot-Watt University is a global leader in Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (RAI). Future opportunities include:

- Collaboration across public, academic and health sectors to apply data science, to develop innovative and financially sustainable models of health and social care that improve lives.
- Data-driven approaches to prevention, treatment, and health and care service provision, enabling high quality and efficient care within a world-leading learning healthcare system.
- Delivering business premises of the future are ready for data-drive innovation opportunities, including the City Region Deal Fife i3 Programme and Central Borders Innovation Park.

- Smart and future proofed infrastructure – ensuring the region is at the forefront of new infrastructure and in a position to deliver 5G and superfast broadband across the region that can enable businesses to locate, invest and grow in our more remote and rural locations whilst also allowing people to work from home and more flexibly.

Theme 3 – Adaptable

To respond to change the region must be able to adapt. Economic changes, including technological advances are rapidly taking place and changing the way we work and access services. Climate change is bringing challenges and opportunities for the region, including the need for adaptation, mitigation and sequestration measures; this could also bring significant opportunities to justly transition to a low carbon economy. Our people also need to adapt in terms of lifestyle, and we must change our skills base to meet the requirements of our future economy.

- Better connected - Future priorities to ensure that the region is better connected, include:
 - Measures to increase workforce mobility, especially for residents of disadvantaged communities, primarily through the integration of land use and transport, utilising contra-peak capacity in the transport network and providing reliable, frequent and affordable high-quality public transport.
 - Identifying priority routes for active travel to and from the new strategic housing sites, as well as from main centres of population to centres of employment, education and training as well as other public facilities including health care;
 - Focus on the routes where investment in bus priority measures will have the greatest impact on modal shift and supporting the more disadvantaged communities.
 - Interventions that, individually and/or collectively, demonstrably address climate change and reduce carbon emissions.
 - Considering potential longer-term schemes for tram, light rail and heavy rail.
- Sustainable - We have established four task and finish groups to deliver strategic outline cases for the development of sustainable Energy Management Systems, Regional Supply Chains, developing an Investment Prospectus for COP 26 and setting out a Risk impact for climate change consequences, including economic consequences. Additional opportunities to help ensure the region can adapt to climate change and transition to zero carbon emissions include:
 - Sustainable Modern Methods of Construction – The scale and pipeline of regional housing development presents a unique opportunity for innovation and use of offsite manufacturing methods of construction to ensure that homes are future proofed being built to the highest quality and energy efficiency standards with significantly reduced waste and carbon emissions. Continued collaboration with Edinburgh Napier University’s Institute for Sustainable Construction and Construction Scotland Innovation Centre.
 - Energy - The region already has some significant assets that can help enable the transition to a low carbon economy. However, harnessing this collective potential combined with future investment, behavioural change, and recycling will be essential to meet ambitious local and national targets. Existing key assets and opportunities across the region include:
 - Energy Park Fife - Energy Park Fife is a world leading engineering and research zone within the energy sector.
 - Energy from Waste Plants - Maximising connections to Midlothian and East Lothian sites to deliver low carbon heating in the South East of Scotland.
 - Geothermal - There are several former coal fields across south east Scotland, such as the Midlothian and East Lothian and Fife coal fields, where there is significant potential to abstract and make use of warm mine water to develop geothermal heat networks.

- Recycling - Significant expansion in recycling facilities, consideration could be given to regional recycling hubs.
- Green, Blue Infrastructure and nature based solutions, including carbon capture and sequestration. We will identify regional project, programmes and actions that will help us to adapt to and mitigate future climate, focusing on reduction measures and the mitigation and sequestration. Afforestation and enhancing the significant woodland and wetland assets within the region and particularly the Scottish Borders

Our big moves

This section sets out some of the major regional opportunities that have been identified through the RGF development process. Each aligns with one or more of the themes set out above. These opportunities cannot be fully realised without a regional approach and will deliver significant impact with the potential to reshape the region's future.

- Re-designing the economy: Data Driven Innovation - maximising the impact of the CRD, building data capability across firms, sectors, schools, infrastructure and communities;
- Re-building communities (both new and existing): addressing affordability and connectivity within 20 min neighbourhoods, and re-thinking our High Streets, in both a city centre and a town centre context, focusing on new roles and new uses;
- Reducing the need to travel, and increasing family support, through new approaches to employment and working patterns ('working near home');
- Rethinking mobility and transport, making us the city region with the lowest car dependency in Scotland, but the best and most integrated connectivity locally, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- Regenerating the Forth estuary: from Rosyth to Cockenzie, taking in the Forth Bridges and Granton, linking to Grangemouth/Forth Valley;
- Re-imagining sustainable tourism: regionally and nationally connected, with sustainable assets and attractions across the region;
- Re-building support for business: to focus on good growth and a new wave of entrepreneurialism, with a strong focus on green businesses;
- Re-designing the new skills system; focused on emerging sectors and technologies;
- Re-inventing healthcare: One Health, focused around the Bio Quarter, Easterbush, etc working with the NHS Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships;
- Responding to the challenges and opportunities presented by the climate crisis the region will deliver a collaborative approach across energy management systems, regional supply chains, COP 26 investment prospectus and risk impact for climate change consequences.

Insert with a map / spatial diagram showing the linkages across the region.

Better Connected

The interdependence between local partners has never been greater with increased mobility of workers and people choosing to live, work and invest in locations across the region irrespective of local authority boundaries. South East Scotland is well placed to capitalise on improved international, UK cross-border as well as national connectivity, including between Edinburgh and London. Edinburgh Airport, ports on the Firth of Forth and the radial transport corridors to, through and from our region connect it to other UK, Scottish regions and City Region Deals including Tay Cities and Borderlands. These routes and our digital connectivity provide the means to develop wider relationships and to seek out, attract and share new opportunities. Edinburgh city centre and the regional core have an unrivalled role, but many of our major cross boundary connections converge elsewhere in the region. A better more sustainably connected region underpins its future success. Some of our key objectives are to promote future growth within the city centre, regional core and along our growth corridors in line with the high-level approach below:

- Connecting West – we want to build a new partnership between the Edinburgh and Glasgow City Regions to address labour market linkages, sustainable connectivity and sectoral collaboration. We also want to ensure we take advantage of our shared UK cross border connectivity and associated development opportunities, including logistics, freight and storage and distribution as well as manufacturing;

- Connecting North – utilising recent investment in the new Forth crossing, we want to improve connections to the Tay Cities Region and Aberdeen City Region areas, and to make available growth opportunities in key locations within Fife, including the former Longannet Power Station site, Port of Rosyth and Fife Energy Park, as well as around the Forth Bridge heads and at Edinburgh Airport, including growth of our financial, insurance and other professional sectors;
- Connecting East – utilising existing and future enhancement of UK cross border connections between south east Scotland, north east England and London we want to reduce journey times and strengthen the UK cross border cities network. Along this corridor there is significant potential to align plans for substantial economic and housing growth in a new regional growth location focused on an enlarged new settlement with new regional town centre, the redevelopment of former Cockenzie Power Station site and a new regional gateway transport hub;
- Connecting South – the BioQuarter, and Edinburgh Innovation Park at Musselburgh cluster around the A720 (east end), A1, and East Coast Main Line; with Easter Bush nearby in the A701 growth corridor. The Borders Railway remains a major corridor for sustainable growth and rural regeneration; and there are also opportunities for tram line links to centres in Midlothian. A potential extension of the Borders Rail Line to Carlisle offers scope to improve UK cross border connectivity between the south of Scotland and the north west of England. In the future we will continue to use these established corridors to enable a sustainable pattern of development and on-going inclusive growth
- Lead role in linking regions and Deals together to identify complimentary projects and to explore new opportunities, maximise limited investment and efficiencies and reduce duplication. This can enable the region to look West along the M8 to the central belt and Glasgow; North to the Tay Cities Deal and beyond; South-East to Newcastle and Northumbria and the South East of England, and South to the Borderlands Deal and across the border.

Our approach to delivery

This section sets out how the projects, big moves and themes converge into a framework for delivery. The RGF Action Plan will reflect a short term focus (years 1-3), and it is envisaged that the action plan will be a live document, which will be updated frequently as projects are developed and delivered. The RGF will be refreshed at 3 – 5 year intervals.

Over the short, medium (years 4-6), and longer (years 7-10) term horizons, the Edinburgh & SE Scotland City Region Deal (EESCRD); the regional pipeline of projects; and the identified “big moves” will all inform action plan updates. Further information on each element and how it links to RGF delivery is outlined below:

Delivering the Deal

In these uncertain times the £1.3bn EESCR Deal provides certainty both in terms of investment but also the 15-year commitment made between the Deal signatories. The projects and programmes in the Deal provide committed investment, together providing a strong foundation to grow, leverage and develop opportunities for the regional economy.

The EESCR Deal is of national importance with significant implications for Scotland’s future growth. This Framework seeks to build on the EESCR Deal and maximise our existing assets by outlining key measures, priorities and opportunities which have arisen from the collaboration and which respond to the economic and climate challenges that face us all.

Pipeline Projects

The region has worked collaboratively to prioritise a pipeline of projects which can be delivered over the short to medium term (1-6 years) with the right investment and partnership approach to deliver against the three key thematic areas of the Regional Economic Framework.

Big Moves

The strategic programmes, partnership and approaches outlined in the ‘Big Moves’ section aims to ensure that the region delivers the vision and ambition of the Regional Growth Framework over the next 20 years.

Action Plan

An action plan with a short timescales focus will be regularly updated to ensure that the key projects and deliverables of the framework are live and area able to react and respond to future economic, societal and environmental factors to best meet the needs of our communities.

Overseeing change

The delivery of the change proposed within the Framework will require a significant collective effort from a range of organisations.

Key partners in the delivery of the Regional Growth Framework will include the Edinburgh City Region Deal signatories (the six local authorities, together with regional universities, colleges and the Regional Enterprise Council, UK and Scottish Governments), as well as a range of other organisations with a key role in the Region.

The successful delivery of the Framework and action plan requires each of its elements to be implemented in a coordinated way. An effective structure is already in place to support the delivery of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal, and this will be basis of a broader public / private sector economic partnership to guide and monitor the delivery of the Framework.

The Regional Enterprise Council – has already started to influence and shape the Framework and will continue to ensure that strong, effective leadership and input is provided across the public and private sectors.

The Elected Member Oversight Committee established in January 2021, ensures that that the Framework is developed and governed through to the delivery phase with the appropriate local level scrutiny.

The regional partners are committed to working together to develop and deliver our vision for the future of our region. We are keen to continue to focus on our strong relationship with national agencies, and the Scottish and UK Governments, to ensure that our regional efforts are both supported by, and contribute strongly to, the wider national context. We look forward to continued joint working to share and realise our vision.