

Manifesto for the renaissance of our city region

Chamber vision for the North-east

Ahead of the local authority elections in May 2017, Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce asked its members what their priorities are for the success of the region.

Our economy is at a key crossroads. Strong foundations are in place but we need the confidence, leadership and brave decision-making that will help write the next chapter in the Aberdeen success story.

Despite the recent economic downturn, we strongly believe that the North-east of Scotland can look forward to a bright future.

We need our two local authorities to continue to improve their collaboration and to deliver the city centre masterplan, the city region deal and the enhanced infrastructure we need – at pace. Additionally, we ask that you back the Developing the Young Workforce agenda to support business growth and diversification.

This is already a great place to live, work, study, visit, invest and do business.

Let's all pull together to make it even better.

**For feedback, contact the
Chamber's policy team**



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Delivering a renaissance

Councillors, what do we want you to do?

- Engage with and listen to the business community
- Talk up the North-east and all the opportunities here, when travelling in Scotland and further afield
- Work constructively across the political divide, for the good of the region
- Put economic success at the heart of every decision

Let's be joined up

Coordinate both councils' future approach to development on a city-region basis. This allows for bespoke support to other North-east locations like Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Banff, Stonehaven, Huntly and Macduff.

Create maximum impact through additional cross-council collaboration on economic development, planning, procurement, education, housing, digital and transport infrastructure.

Work in partnership with the private sector to make the case for devolved fiscal powers which will deliver economic growth.

Develop people's skills, ambitions and motivation

Ensure secondary schools engage with local businesses by allocating responsibility to named staff within schools for the *Developing the Young Workforce* (DYW) agenda.

Make DYW North East Scotland the best single point of contact for education and employer engagement in Scotland.

Support teachers to become more informed of the regional jobs market and the career pathways that are available to young people.

Inspire and create ambition in young people by developing their workplace skills so they can play their part in writing the next chapter of the North-east success story.

Make the vision for city and shire a reality

Prioritise and fast-track development and refurbishment which increases activity and footfall in the city centre.

Enable and develop a world-class events offering by streamlining the licensing process for third-party events.

Council investment in the city centre should be focused on achieving "quick wins" and addressing basic failures by building, paving, cleaning and delivering improvements to public spaces.

Take the hard decisions to deliver the masterplan's proposed infrastructure improvements to enable a more pedestrian-friendly city centre.

Execute plans to regenerate towns in Aberdeenshire, creating bold personalities reflecting communities' needs and enabling economic opportunities.

A great place to invest, live and visit

Optimise the existing road networks to ensure efficient journey times onto the AWPR and around the North-east.

Deliver more housing, with an emphasis on affordable housing to retain key workers in the region, fast-tracking sites identified in the local plan through the planning process.

Start work on the following transport projects to ensure they are delivered when needed in the years following completion of the AWPR:

- Aberdeen - Peterhead / Fraserburgh transport improvements
- Berryden corridor improvements
- A new River Dee crossing
- Train stations at Kintore and Newtonhill

- Enabling transport connections to the Aberdeen Harbour development at Nigg Bay

Be ambitious and drive the prompt improvement of digital and mobile infrastructure in the North-east to provide world-class connectivity.



"The 2014 Wood report *Education Working for All* really showed me the vital role that early contact with employers can play in maximising young people's employment prospects. At Stork, we believe the engagement facilitated by DYW is a strategic priority which also provides personal development for our employees and we were delighted to enter into a partnership with Meldrum Academy through DYW."

Ross Richardson
vice president human resources
(UK & Africa)
Stork, a Fluor company

Maximise our economic potential

Work constructively with Opportunity North East and the private sector.

Prioritise the delivery of initiatives which enable the growth of the four key sectors identified in the Regional Economic Strategy: oil and gas, food and drink, tourism and life sciences.

Review councils' activities on international trade and assess whether other organisations could lead on aspects of this activity.

Buy North East. Increase efforts to procure services and products from North-east businesses.

Continue to let the private sector deliver the Business Gateway programme, led by Elevator.



"The progression of Aberdeen's city centre has not matched its elevated status as Europe's Energy Capital. It is therefore positive to see private and public sector developments take place which are kick-starting regeneration. However, collective focus is vital to the delivery of the key projects set out in the City Centre Masterplan. We need a vibrant city centre that local residents are proud of and one that visitors want to return to."

Derren McRae
managing director - Aberdeen
CBRE Ltd



"We need our councillors to deliver on promises related to the City Region Deal which will help our economy diversify and secure our future"

Emily Taylor
project co-ordinator
Step Change in Safety

What do we want our Chamber to do?

- Promote business achievements across Scotland, the UK and internationally
- Support your efforts to secure a fairer funding and capital settlement from the Scottish Government
- Publicly back the city centre masterplan
- Increase commitment to internationalise, where appropriate
- Support the DYW agenda
- Support you when you make the difficult decisions which help deliver the big picture
- Challenge you vigorously when you hesitate to make the difficult decisions