



**Aberdeen &
Grampian
Chamber of
Commerce**

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Media Release

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Delegates given the chance to ‘invest’ in transformational Vanguard projects

ABERDONIANS will be asked to show how they would invest £100,000 towards transforming the future economic prosperity of the region when eight key projects are put forward during next week’s Vanguard Conference.

More than 150 people have already booked a place at the event at which council leaders, chief executives, business leaders and potential investors will hear a number of business cases exploring a range of topics including how to attract more European tourists to the North-east, what is needed to re-invent Union Street and how to make more of the region’s thriving food and drink sector.

Attendees will each be given a token £100,000 pot to invest in the projects they believe will have the most impact. They can use it to back one project or divide the funds across more if they think they are worth taking forward.

Organised by Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, together with Shell UK and other partners, the conference is latest in a series of events aimed at challenging norms and inspiring bold, new ways of thinking in order to write the next chapter in the success story of the region.

In addition to the group presentations, the conference will hear from speakers including Rob Shorthouse, client and communications director for Scotrail, who will be sharing his personal lessons learnt from the Glasgow Commonwealth Games bid and how to engage the wider community in economic activity; Jennifer Crow, chief executive of Opportunity North East, who will give an update on progress towards the renaissance region vision; and Adrian Webster, motivation speaker and author of the best-selling book ‘Polar Bear Pirates’, who will deliver a presentation on ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

The conference will also feature audience participation including interactive voting and a lively Q&A with panellists including Angela Scott, chief executive of Aberdeen City Council; Jim Savege, chief executive of Aberdeenshire Council; David Millar, technology accelerator director at the Oil & Gas

Technology Centre; Chris Foy, chief executive of VisitAberdeenshire; and Chamber chief executive Russell Borthwick.

Mr Borthwick said: “These are critical moments for us. A rich, vibrant and diverse environment is something which impacts each and every one of us. If we are to deliver the legacy we want for future generations and ensure we become a renaissance region, not a museum to what was once Europe’s oil and gas capital, we need to continue making brave decisions.

“There is there is a growing passion across the North-east to redefine our future. The drive and enthusiasm among the workgroups will help us identify new ways of thinking and acting and I would urge anyone with an interest in what happens next for our region to get involved and be part of making it happen.”

The Vanguard Legacy initiative aims to have a direct positive impact on Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire across the next two to five years, building on the momentum created by the city region deal and a range of public and private sector investment projects valued in excess of £8billion which are either planned or already underway in the region.

Around 100 volunteers of all ages, sectors and backgrounds have been working to develop business cases for eight key projects designed to create an amazing legacy for future generations of Aberdonians. Each group will have 15 minutes to pitch their game-changing ideas at the conference in the hope of securing the backing to take their ideas forward.

The projects the groups will present on are:

- What will it take to get this region on the map as a serious European short break destination and what iconic attraction would help us to achieve this?
- How could a world class events programme in the region drive in-bound tourism as well as making this an even better place to live and what might this look like?
- How do we make sure we retain graduates and our very best talent in the North-east?
- What would be required to make sure any future capital/city of culture bid was successful?
- How do we make Aberdeen a ‘cool’ place for residents, students and visitors?
- The North-east is already Scotland’s capital for food and drink production; how do we bring this to life for local consumers and visitors?
- What will it take to make the people of the area fall back in love with Union Street?
- How can we build on the success of Buy North-east to promote a culture of local procurement?

The one-day 'Route to Renaissance' Vanguard conference is open to everyone and takes place at the Belmont Filmhouse on Tuesday, December 5. All-day parking and refreshments are included in the fee. For more information visit www.agcc.co.uk

Ends

Notes to editor

- **Media are welcome to attend the conference but must register in advance. Please email using the details below. Conference agenda attached, interview opportunities will be available during the breaks.**
- Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce (AGCC) is North-east Scotland's leading private sector, member-focused, business organisation. The Chamber represents more than 1,250 businesses with almost 125,000 employees in the private sector covering all industry sectors, ranging in size from sole traders to multi-national corporations.

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