

## GLASGOW CITY REGION INTELLIGENCE HUB DEVELOPMENT PAPER (NOVEMBER 2016)

### 1. Introduction and background

A number of development streams have all highlighted the opportunity to develop a new City Region Intelligence/Research Hub, and the significant limitations on city region ambitions if this is not advanced. These messages are consistent from:

- recommendations of the Enterprise portfolio research<sup>1</sup>
- workplan proposals from the City Region Economic Growth Commission
- observations of the need for better generation and use of city-region intelligence in skills planning within the new CR Skills Action Plan
- the identification of significant city region level intelligence gaps within the process to develop the new GCR economic development strategy

Further discussions have identified an exciting opportunity to weave these developments together in an ambitious way. They have the potential to be rooted in a strong partnership approach which maximises the inputs of: local authorities; the CR's academic institutions; existing CR information and research capacity; and national level partners.

On this basis, the paper outlines a vision for a Glasgow City Region Intelligence Hub, and the options and issues to be considered in translating this into practice. It concludes by suggesting an action plan to create a detailed proposition to establish this capacity for presentation to the April 2017 Cabinet.

### 2. Ambition, scale and importance of establishing the Intelligence Hub

This paper recommends an ambitious approach to establishing the Hub. There are clear knowledge gaps at city-region level, and a lack of capacity to drive actions. But this current situation co-exists with significant collective skills and expertise across core city region partners and agencies they support, and within the highly respected academic sector. These remain uncoordinated and significantly untapped in driving forward the Glasgow City Region, and result in limited work *connecting* intelligence and data analysis across policy areas to inform action.

As a consequence, it is recommended that an ambitious approach is required to developing a Hub which provides interconnected city region intelligence, capacity-building and knowledge mobilisation functions. A development of this nature could be crucial to the growing aspirations of the entire city region project – signalling a commitment to 'upping the game' and to genuinely move on from a 'City Deal' to a 'City Region' perspective. It would provide:

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<sup>1</sup> As a consequence of wider developments, the Intelligence Hub has now been removed from specific reference in the Enterprise portfolio. It now requires to be viewed as a more generic city region wide initiative.

- an opportunity to work in stronger partnership with the city region's Universities – harnessing their expertise and research capacity, and ensure increased evidence-based work informs future actions
- an opportunity to combine, analyse and use a significant range of information (including data) at city region level that is already in the system in a much more co-ordinated way. This should be linked to efforts by Councils to make better use of information at local authority level
- a co-ordinating point for information and intelligence to ensure that City Region decision making structures are supported by consistent data and analysis – most current processes are not set up to address to city region spatial agenda or other strategic needs
- best use of resources within the system, minimising the need for additional costs and, through partnership working, an opportunity to lever external resources to support the Glasgow City Region
- the potential to develop and sustain capacity within the city-region – ensuring long term and consistent support is available
- a clear focal point to enable the GCR to engage with, support and benefit from potential wider changes to information gathering and evaluation anticipated at national level following the current review of national enterprise agencies

In practical terms, developing this Hub capacity will also ensure that Glasgow keeps pace with city region developments elsewhere, and 'competes' in this environment. A number of cities in England have developed this type of support as part of city-region developments. Glasgow City Region needs - and has the opportunity - to keep pace with the best of this work.

### 3. Hub vision and objectives

The draft vision of the Hub is therefore suggested as:

*'providing evidence based intelligence to support a **growing, inclusive and sustainable** Glasgow City Region'.*

Specific objectives worked up from could be around:

- Evidencing and informing action
- Maximising and leveraging resources through partnership
- Building and sustaining city-region capacity
- Knowledge mobilisation within the city-region's universities and other agencies
- Responding to requests from CR governance structures
- Generating new ideas and approaches to support innovation
- Connectivity to national developments

#### 4. Hub scope and functions

The indicative scope of work for the Hub is suggested as reflecting the new city region portfolios and wider agenda, and include:

- Economic development
- Growth
- Strategic planning
- Enterprise, skills and employability
- Connectivity
- Housing and environment
- Internationalisation and competitiveness
- Innovation

Specific activities/functions

- Information, intelligence and data gathering
- Pro-active policy research and environmental scanning
- Service development, innovation and design
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Ongoing strategy development
- Research on comparative practice
- Commissioning and management of external research/consultancy work

#### Delivery model

There are a number of options in terms of practical delivery, with combinations of these also worthy of consideration:

- a central physical Hub with a core staffing complement
- a remote working model – where the Hub is entirely virtual in nature
- a combination of the above
- a core Hub augmented by embedded elements e.g. a University Centre for Inclusive Growth
- a fluid resource model with people working (centrally or remotely) on part time/time limited secondments based on specific Hub workloads and projects

In practice, the development process here will be to a degree iterative, with perhaps the need to establish an initial core and grow from there.

#### Resources

Securing direct additional resources from local authorities for these developments will clearly be problematic, and any recommendations which sought these could only be justified once all other options had been explored and maximised. But this must be balanced with recognition of the key importance and significance of the Hub's work to the whole city

region project. Appropriate investment in the Hub may be a very effective and value for money investment of city region resources.

Immediate staff resource options include:

- full/part time/short term secondments of relevant staff identified within local authorities
- identification and incorporation of identified Clyde Plan and SPT research and intelligence capacity within the new Hub
- in the longer term, incorporation of some/all of the current PMO team within the Hub<sup>2</sup>
- Scottish Government resources
- partner resources in Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland etc

A further key resource consideration is the degree to which the Hub would reduce current costs on external consultancy support. Significant costs currently incurred in this way could be redirected to delivery or commissioning via the Hub.

In practice, it is likely that staffing resources will require to include core/ full time fixed staff, augmented by people who may support activities either part time or for a clearly defined period.

### **Engaging and harnessing the resources of the City Region's University sector**

These resource options have considerable potential to be augmented by the establishment of the Hub in collaboration with existing and potential new resources which may be accessed through the University sector. This is an opportunity to further engage a critical and respected city region resource, and could extend the relationship already established through the Economic Commission's review role in the City Deal.

Building the Hub in collaboration with the city region Universities, would have a number of positive dimensions, including:

- the mobilisation of knowledge and expertise in the sector, and connecting this to practical city region action
- capacity building of the future generation to advance the city region through CPD, teaching, PhDs etc
- jointly commissioned applied research

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<sup>2</sup> In the short/medium term the PMO resources may best remain directly focused on supporting the delivery of City Deal infrastructure projects. At least until the first Gateway review in 2019.

## **Governance and reporting**

The new Hub will require the establishment of appropriate management and reporting mechanisms. These need to balance links to wider City Region governance structures, with the potential attractions of enabling some form of independence in the Hub's activities. This requires consideration to be given to how and by whom the workload of the Hub is established, prioritised, and refreshed – recognising that in the initial stages it could quickly be overloaded with requests. Given the remit of the Commission for Economic Growth, the Commission should play a pivotal role in ensuring alignment between the work of the Hub, key city deal targets, and wider objectives agreed by the Cabinet.

Reporting structures should recognise the Hub will be a key resource available to a number of key city region governance mechanisms, providing evidenced based intelligence to inform strategy development and action. This would include:

- the Cabinet
- the Chief Executive's group
- the private sector led Economic Leadership Board

The future governance arrangements also need to consider the current scope of the CR Cabinet role within the Quality Assurance framework, and whether this requires to be amended to enable Hub development. This should consider the legal entity of any Hub delivery mechanism.

## **Recommendations**

Based on this paper, the Cabinet is asked to approve further detailed research on a GCR Intelligence Hub based on the ambition and outline provided. This will be advanced by the Economy sub group and report back to the Cabinet by February 2017. It will present preferred development options in respect of:

- vision and objectives
- scope and functions
- the Hub delivery model and location
- initial and longer term resource options
- specific partnership arrangements with city region academic institutions
- governance and reporting mechanisms
- timescales and action for initial implementation and further development

It is anticipated this work will include:

- further discussions with local authority partners, the PMO, and the Commission for Economic Growth.
- discussions with wider partners, including the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, SDS, Clyde Plan, SPT etc.
- research on good practice elsewhere, including partnership models with Universities in England and elsewhere in Scotland.

- a review of the current scope of the CD Cabinet to advance the Hub development and related matters within current terms of reference

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