



Stirling &  
Clackmannanshire  
City Region Deal

## NOTICE OF MEETING & AGENDA

### **Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee**

#### **AGENDA**

**Thursday 18 June 2026 at 3.00 – 5.00 pm**

This meeting will be held in-person in the Council Chambers, Clackmannanshire Council, Kilncraigs, Alloa, FK10 1EB.

Invitations have also been issued with an MS Teams Meeting link to allow virtual participation.

Members of the public can register to attend the meeting here:

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/e45e54fc-8d44-4132-93c2-cb7255e986ed@ae8c4625-6448-4d14-b856-67b7e052d4b0>

**Neil Harman, Head of Regional Programme Management Office**

City Region Deal Regional Programme Management Office | Old Viewforth | Stirling FK8 2ET |

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W: <https://www.stirclacksdeal.com/>



AGENDA		Page Nos.
1.0	<b>Apologies and substitutions</b>	-
2.0	<b>Declaration of interests</b> Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.	-
3.0	<b>Urgent business</b>	-
4.0	<b><i>Previous minutes, actions and forward Planning</i></b>	
4.1	Minutes of the Meeting of the Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee – 10 March 2026 <i>(Copy Attached)</i>	5 – 10
4.2	Joint Committee Rolling Action Log – June 2026 <i>(Copy Attached)</i>	11 – 14
4.3	Joint Committee Forward Plan – June 2026 <i>(Copy Attached)</i>	15 – 16
5.0	<b><i>Items for consideration</i></b>	
5.1	<b>Report</b> - CRD Audit Report – Action Plan (June Update) - submitted by Neil Harman, Head of Regional Programme Management Office <i>(Copy Attached)</i>	17 – 30
	<b>CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION</b> It is considered that the undernoted item is treated as confidential information.	
5.2	<b>Report</b> – Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal - Annual Report 2026 – submitted by Neil Harman, Head of Regional Programme Management Office <i>(Copy Attached)</i>	31 – 46

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### Joint Committee Membership

**Clackmannanshire Council  
(Chair)**

Councillor Ellen Forson

**Stirling Council  
(Vice Chair)**

Councillor Susan McGill

**University of Stirling**

Mr Graeme Duff

**Clackmannanshire Council**

Councillor Martha Benny

**Stirling Council**

Councillor Neil Benny

**University of Stirling**

Ms Eileen Schofield

**Clackmannanshire Council**

Councillor Janine Rennie

**Stirling Council**

Councillor Gerry McGarvey

**University of Stirling**

Professor Leigh Sparks

### Substitutes (appointed by Council)

**Clackmannanshire Council:**

Councillor Denis Coyne

Councillor Graham Lindsay

Councillor Kenneth Earle

**Stirling Council:**

Councillor Jen Preston

Councillor Elaine Watterson

Councillor Jim Thomson

If a Member who is a representative of the University of Stirling is unable to attend a meeting of the Joint Committee that Member may arrange for a substitute representative of the University of Stirling to attend.

## City Region Deal Joint Committee

# MINUTES

**MINUTES of MEETING of the STIRLING AND CLACKMANNANSHIRE CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS, OLD VIEWFORTH, STIRLING and by MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY 10 MARCH 2026 at 3.00 pm**

### Present

Councillor Martha Benny, Clackmannanshire Council  
 Councillor Neil Benny, Stirling Council  
 Graeme Duff, University of Stirling  
 Councillor Ellen Forson, Clackmannanshire Council  
 Councillor Gerry McGarvey, Stirling Council  
 Councillor Susan McGill, Stirling Council (**Chair**)  
 Councillor Janine Rennie, Clackmannanshire Council  
 Professor Leigh Sparks, University of Stirling

### In Attendance

Jane Burridge, Lead Transformation Officer, Clackmannanshire Council  
 John Craig, Head of the City Region and Growth Deal Programme, University of Stirling  
 Sally Dimeo, Chief Finance Officer, University of Stirling  
 Professor Iain Docherty, Chair of Regional Economic Advisory Group  
 Mark Easton, Lead Solicitor – Commercial & Property, Stirling Council  
 Matt Francis, Communications, University of Stirling  
 Emma Fyvie, Head of Economic Development, Planning & Climate Change, Stirling Council  
 Neil Harman, Head of RPMO  
 Mark Henderson, Communications Team Leader, Stirling Council  
 Brian Roberts, Chief Executive, Stirling Council  
 Lena Schelling, Senior Programme Manager, RPMO  
 Jillian Schofield, Service Manager – Culture, Events and Tourism, Stirling Council  
 Kevin Wells, Strategic Director of Place, Clackmannanshire Council  
 David McDougall, Governance Officer, Stirling Council (Clerk)

### *Recording of Meeting started*

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chair of the Joint Committee, welcomed everyone and advised that the meeting was being broadcast live via the Stirling Council website and that a recording would also be made publicly available on the website following the meeting.

The Chair asked the Clerk to carry out a roll call to confirm the Joint Committee members present.



**CRD52 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Eileen Schofield from the University of Stirling.

Apologies were also noted from Nikki Bridle, Chief Executive of Clackmannanshire Council.

**CRD53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**CRD54 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**CRD55 MINUTES – STIRLING & CLACKMANNANSHIRE CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE – 18 SEPTEMBER 2025**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee held on 18 September 2025 were submitted for approval.

**Decision**

The Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of 18 September 2025 as an accurate record of proceedings.

**CRD56 JOINT COMMITTEE ROLLING ACTION LOG**

The Joint Committee Rolling Action log was submitted for review with updates provided accordingly.

Senior officers present answered a range of questions from Joint Committee members regarding the information set out within the action log.

**Actions**

RPMO to combine Audit actions.

**Decision**

The Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee agreed to note the updates provided and to the combining of 2 Audit related actions into 1.

**CRD57 JOINT COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN**

The Joint Committee Forward Plan was submitted for review with updates provided accordingly.

Senior officers present answered a range of questions from Joint Committee members regarding the information set out within the forward plan.



The Joint Committee highlighted their requirement for greater transparency on COG decision making and requested sight of the COG meeting minutes where possible.

### **Actions**

COG and RPMO to review the existing planned briefings and June Joint Committee Agenda items with COG and identify opportunities to spread items across future meetings, including the possibility of Special meeting(s).

COG and RPMO to agree a suitable solution regarding request for greater transparency on COG decision making.

### **Decision**

The Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee agreed to note the forward plan.

## **CRD58 STIRLING TRAIL - WAYFINDING AND INTERPRETATION**

The report sought approval of the Stirling Trail – Wayfinding and Interpretation Business Justification Case. The project requested £330,000 of City Region Deal funding to deliver an improved, connected walking route across Stirling’s historic core, supported by new interpretative panels, refreshed wayfinding signage and digital mapping. The work aimed to increase visitor dwell time, enhance navigation, and encourage movement from Stirling Castle into the wider city centre and beyond. Works were expected to complete in 2026/27. The business case had been endorsed by Scottish Government.

Senior officers present answered a range of questions from Joint Committee members regarding the information set out within the report.

### **Decision**

The Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee agreed to:-

1. note the contents of the report and the Stirling Trail – Wayfinding and Interpretation Business Justification Case; and
2. approve the Stirling Trail – Wayfinding and Interpretation Business Justification Case, and note that officers will progress the project, subject to all internal Stirling Council governance approvals being obtained.

(Reference: Report by Head of Economic Development, Planning and Climate Change, Stirling Council, 17 February 2026, submitted)

## **CRD59 ALLOA HERITAGE & ENTERPRISE CENTRE - PROJECT**

The report sought to share an overview of the Clackmannanshire CHT project, provide an update of progress to date on business case development and funding and outline next steps. The report also provided a summary of the Greenfield House Phase 1 repairs contract currently in delivery.



In March 2024 Clackmannanshire Council and the University of Stirling endorsed in principle a joint proposal to consolidate the Clackmannanshire based CRD projects into a single programme – the Alloa Innovation Campus (AIC). This included the two University led Innovation projects; Scotland’s International Environment Centre (SIEC) Phase 2 and the Intergenerational Living Innovation Hub (ILIH) and, the Council led, Culture Heritage & Tourism (CHT) and Regional Digital Hub Projects.

The proposed co-location of projects within Greenfield House (GFH) presented the opportunity to enrich the overall CRD investment, improve deliverability and create a lasting legacy. It also ensured the future of a historic building bringing it back into an innovative economic and social use and creating a catalyst for the wider regeneration of Alloa Town Centre.

Senior officers present answered a range of questions from Joint Committee members regarding the information set out within the report.

### **Decision**

The Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee agreed to note the development of the Alloa Heritage & Enterprise Centre project, ongoing progress with the Greenfield House phase 1 repairs contract and associated community benefits being provided.

(Reference: Report by Strategic Director – Place, Clackmannanshire Council, undated, submitted)

## **CRD60 PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF JOINT COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2026 – 2027**

The report advised the Joint Committee that the current schedule of Joint Committee meetings would end with the meeting scheduled to take place on 10 March 2026. After the March meeting, the Chair of the Joint Committee would revert to Clackmannanshire Council in line with the Joint Committee Standing Orders. The report asked Joint Committee to agree to a proposed schedule of meetings for the 2026 – 2027 term when Clackmannanshire Council would have the Chair.

Senior officers present answered a range of questions from Joint Committee members regarding the information set out within the report.

The Head of the RPMO advised of a potential issue with the proposed June meeting date which would be confirmed following further discussion. It was agreed that the proposed schedule would be agreed subject to a potential change needed to the June meeting date.

### **Action**

RPMO to progress the scheduling of future Joint Committee meetings with Clackmannanshire Democratic Services.



**Decision**

The Stirling & Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Joint Committee agreed to the proposed schedule of meetings for 2026 - 2027 as set out at paragraph 1.4 of the report, subject to a potential change needed to the June meeting date which would be confirmed by the RPMO in due course.

(Reference: Report by Chief Officer - Governance, Stirling Council, 16 February 2026, submitted)

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 4.20 pm





This relates to  
Item 4.2  
on the Agenda

## Joint Committee Action Log – June 2026

# CITY REGION DEAL JOINT COMMITTEE ROLLING ACTION LOG

RAL No.	Joint Committee Date	Report Title	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date (expected or actual)	Comments / Update
1	19/6/2025	STIRLING AND CLACKMANNANSHIRE CITY REGION DEAL – ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025	<b>Finance Data regarding private sector investment and regional partner investment to be provided to Joint Committee Members</b>	COG	Joint Committee Mar 2026	<b>OPEN</b> - this action will set out a <b>Funding Report</b> that covers all funding types (CRD Funding, Match/Partner Funding & Leverage Funding) The CRD Funding element has already been shared as part of the JC Briefing held on 9 June. Action remain open until Funding Report shared.
2	19/6/2025	STIRLING AND CLACKMANNANSHIRE CITY REGION DEAL – ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025	<b>Final updated version of the 2025 annual report to be available to Committee Members for information.</b>	RPMO	Dec 2025	<b>CLOSED</b> - Accessible version uploaded to CRD website ( <a href="http://www.stirclacksdeal.com">www.stirclacksdeal.com</a> )  Annual Report (accessible version): <a href="#">Stirling and Clackmananshire City Region Deal Annual Report 2024-25</a>
3	19/6/2025	STIRLING AND CLACKMANNANSHIRE CITY REGION DEAL – ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025	<b>Details of the review process and timescales for this to be shared with Joint Committee Members.</b>	RPMO	Sep 2025	<b>CLOSED</b> – action superseded by new Sept action on same item. See RAL 8.



## Joint Committee Action Log – June 2026

RAL No.	Joint Committee Date	Report Title	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date (expected or actual)	Comments / Update
4	19/6/2025	CRD INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – SCHEDULE UPDATE	<b>Details of initial agreed scope of the Deal audit and timescales to be shared with with Joint Committee Members.</b>	Brian Roberts	Sep 2025	<b>CLOSED</b> - action superseded by new Sept action on same item. See RAL 7
5	19/6/2025	CRD INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – SCHEDULE UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Preparation of draft audit report: August 2025</b></li> <li>• <b>Report to Joint Committee: Autumn 2025</b></li> <li>• <b>Report to CRD Partner Committees &amp; Boards: Autumn 2025.</b></li> </ul>	Brian Roberts	Sep 2025	<b>CLOSED</b> – CRD audit briefing held on 31 March and action combined with action RAL 7. Audit Report – Action Plan update on forward look for June Joint Committee.
6	18/9/2025	PREVIOUS MINUTES – MEETING OF 19 JUNE 2025	<b>Rolling Action Log to be prepared for each meeting of Joint Committee to allow tracking of actions from previous meetings.</b>	RPMO	Sep 2025	<b>CLOSED</b> - Action log now in place.
7	18/9/2025	PREVIOUS MINUTES – MEETING OF 19 JUNE 2025	<b>Briefing update regarding Audit process to be provided to Joint Committee Members ahead of next scheduled</b>	Brian Roberts	JC Mar 2026	<b>CLOSED</b> – CRD audit briefing held on 31 March and action now supersedes action RAL 4&5. Audit Report – Action Plan update on forward look for June Joint Committee.



## Joint Committee Action Log – June 2026

RAL No.	Joint Committee Date	Report Title	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date (expected or actual)	Comments / Update
			meeting of Joint Committee.			
8	18/9/2025	PREVIOUS MINUTES – MEETING OF 19 JUNE 2025	<b>Briefing update regarding the Annual Report 2026 development plan to be provided to Joint Committee Members ahead of next schedule meeting of Joint Committee</b>	RPMO	Jan 2026	<b>CLOSED</b> - RPMO provided 2026 Annual Report Development Plan Report to JC members via email for feedback. Feedback received from JC members which has been incorporated into Dev Plan. Progressed version of 2026 Annual Report covered at June JC Briefing. Final version of 2026 Annual Report on Agenda for Joint Committee June 2026 for further member's feedback and approval for July publication concluding Annual Report process for 2026.
9	18/9/2025	CITY PARK STIRLING	<b>Report providing an overview of match-funding achieved and future potential, across the full Deal, to be brought to a future meeting of the Joint Committee.</b>	COG	JC March 2026	<b>CLOSED</b> – combined with RAL 1 as that action will set out a <i>complete</i> Funding Report that covers all 3 funding categories (CRD Funding, Match/Partner Funding & Leverage Funding)
10	10/3/2026	FORWARD PLAN	<b>COG and RPMO to review the existing planned briefings and June Joint Committee Agenda items with COG and identify opportunities to spread</b>	COG / RPMO	May 2026	<b>CLOSED</b> – COG & RPMO have considered Forward Look for June and moved items from June to later Joint Committees to balance load. Sept & Jan JC Forward Plan is now under review as throughput emerges. COG & RPMO have also held JC Briefing (9 June) to socialise topical items with JC and remove



## Joint Committee Action Log – June 2026

RAL No.	Joint Committee Date	Report Title	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date (expected or actual)	Comments / Update
			items across future meetings, including the possibility of Special meeting(s).			dependency on Joint committee meetings to cover topics in detail.
11	10/3/2026	FORWARD PLAN	COG and RPMO to agree a suitable solution to Joint Committee request for greater transparency on COG decision making and sight of the COG meeting minutes where possible.	COG / RPMO	Dec 2026 (aligned with Audit Report Action Plan)	<b>OPEN</b> – COG & RPMO considering best approach alongside other areas of improvement covered in Audit Report (e.g Dashboard Reporting)
12	10/3/2026	PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF JOINT COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2026 – 2027	RPMO to progress the scheduling of future Joint Committee meetings with Clackmannanshire Democratic Services.	RPMO	April 2026	<b>CLOSED</b> – Committee Services have scheduled the Joint Committee meetings.

This relates to  
Item 4.3  
on the Agenda

## Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Regional Deal - Master Forward Plan 2026 /2027

### QUARTER 2

KEY CRD ACTIVITY BETWEEN JOINT COMMITTEES			
DATE	TYPE	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
TO BE CONFIRMED	CRD DELIVERY	Further engagement between COG & JC Members in relation to CRD Reset next steps	CRD Governance
TO BE CONFIRMED	CRD OPERATIONAL	Engagement between RPMO & JC Members in relation to Benefit Realisation and identifying key measurements for Deal level strategic outcomes	CRD Reporting

QUARTERLY JOINT COMMITTEE				
DATE	LEAD	TYPE	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
17 SEPT	RPMO	STANDARD AGENDA	Joint Committee Rolling Action Log	Joint Committee Standard Item
	RPMO	STANDARD AGENDA	Joint Committee Forward Plan	Joint Committee Standard Item
	COG	CRD OPERATIONAL	CRD Reset ( <a href="#">holding line - to be confirmed</a> )	CRD Governance
	RPMO	CRD OPERATIONAL	CRD Benefits Realisation - Update Report ( <a href="#">holding line - to be confirmed</a> )	CRD Reporting
PIPELINE AGENDA ITEMS:	Stirling & Clacks Council	CRD DELIVERY	Culture Heritage & Tourism Programme - Delivery Update	CRD Reporting
	Stirling Council	CRD DELIVERY	Active Travel Business Justification Case (BJC): Dunblane to Causewayhead	Business Case
	Clackmannanshire Council	CRD DELIVERY	Culture Heritage & Tourism, Outline Business Case (OBC): Alloa Heritage and Enterprise Centre	Business Case
	Clackmannanshire Council	CRD DELIVERY	Active Travel Business Justification Case (BJC): Fishcross to Stirling University	Business Case

POTENTIAL SPECIAL MEETINGS OF JOINT COMMITTEE			
DATE	TYPE	ITEM	DESCRIPTION

### QUARTER 3

KEY CRD ACTIVITY BETWEEN JOINT COMMITTEES			
DATE	TYPE	ITEM	DESCRIPTION

QUARTERLY JOINT COMMITTEE				
DATE	LEAD	TYPE	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
14 JAN	RPMO	STANDARD AGENDA	Joint Committee Rolling Action Log	Joint Committee Standard Item
	RPMO	STANDARD AGENDA	Joint Committee Forward Plan	Joint Committee Standard Item
	RPMO	CRD OPERATIONAL	Audit Action Plan - Update Report (to conclude recommendations)	CRD Reporting
		CRD OPERATIONAL		
PIPELINE AGENDA ITEMS:	Stirling Council	CRD DELIVERY	Innovation, Strategic Outline Case (SOC): Innovation Project	Business Case
	Stirling Council	CRD DELIVERY	Culture Heritage & Tourism, Business Justification Case (BJC): The Smith Art Gallery & Museum	Business Case
	Stirling Council	CRD DELIVERY	Culture Heritage & Tourism, Strategic Outline Case (SOC)/ Outline Business Case (OBC) : The Albert Halls	Business Case
	Stirling Council	CRD DELIVERY	Culture Heritage & Tourism, Business Justification Case (BJC): Bannockburn House	Business Case
	Clackmannanshire Council	CRD DELIVERY	Culture, Heritage & Tourism, Full Business Case (FBC): Alloa Heritage and Enterprise Centre	Business Case

POTENTIAL SPECIAL MEETINGS OF JOINT COMMITTEE			
DATE	TYPE	ITEM	DESCRIPTION



This relates to  
Item 5.1  
on the Agenda

# REPORT

Joint Committee Thursday 18 June 2026 Agenda Item 5.1

## CRD Audit Report - Action Plan (June update)

### Executive summary

Request to note the updated **CRD Audit Report - Action Plan (June update)** following feedback provided at the Joint Committee briefing on the **Internal Audit Report – S&C City Region Deal Partnership Level Review (27 March 2026)**

**Neil Harman**, Head of RPMO

City Region Deal

[harmann@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:harmann@stirling.gov.uk)

## Recommendations

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Joint Committee is asked to:

1. Note the updated Action Plan in response to the Internal Audit recommendations.
2. Note that progress against the Action Plan will be monitored through the established governance arrangements and reported to the Joint Committee as appropriate.
3. Delegate authority to the Head of Regional Programme Management Office to implement the approved actions in conjunction with partner organisations and relevant governance groups.

## Implications

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The Internal Audit Review provides independent assurance regarding the governance, risk management, financial control, and reporting arrangements operating across the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal partnership.

The audit concluded with an overall opinion of “Substantial Assurance,” confirming that governance and control arrangements are largely satisfactory and operating effectively, while identifying areas where further enhancement and formalisation of arrangements would strengthen programme oversight and assurance.

The updated Action Plan demonstrates the Joint Committee’s commitment to continuous improvement, good governance, transparency, and effective programme management across the City Region Deal partnership.

Implementation of the agreed actions will further strengthen governance arrangements, programme reporting, benefits realisation, risk management, and financial oversight.

## Legal & Risk Implications and Mitigation

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The recommendations arising from the Internal Audit Review are intended to strengthen existing governance and assurance arrangements across the City Region Deal partnership.

Failure to implement the agreed actions may result in:

- reduced governance transparency,
- inconsistent reporting arrangements,

- reduced clarity regarding risk ownership and oversight,
- and potential non-compliance with aspects of grant and assurance requirements.

Mitigation measures include:

- development of a formal implementation Action Plan,
- assignment of responsible officers and target completion dates,
- monitoring of progress through the Chief Officers' Group and Regional Programme Management Office,
- and regular reporting to Joint Committee.

The audit confirmed that no critical findings were identified. One high-risk recommendation, three medium-risk recommendations, and seven low-risk recommendations were identified, all of which have been reviewed by management.

## Background

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An Internal Audit Review of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal partnership-level governance arrangements was undertaken by Stirling Council Internal Audit during 2025/26.

The purpose of the review was to provide independent assurance to the Joint Committee regarding governance, risk management, financial control, and reporting arrangements operating at partnership level across the City Region Deal.

The review considered:

- strategic direction and decision-making arrangements,
- operation of the Joint Committee and supporting governance structures,
- programme risk management,
- financial management and grant claim processes,
- and reporting arrangements to Government and governance bodies.

The final audit report, issued on 27 March 2026, and shared at Joint Committee Briefing on 31 March 2026, concluded with an overall opinion of "Substantial Assurance".

The audit identified a series of recommendations intended to further strengthen governance and operational arrangements. An updated Action Plan has been prepared in consultation with partner organisations to address all agreed recommendations.

Members were previously briefed on the findings of the audit review and provided feedback on the initial proposed response and improvement actions, which have since been updated.

## Considerations

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In undertaking the Internal Audit, we are considering the following:

- Ensuring governance arrangements remain robust, transparent, and aligned to best practice.
- Strengthening programme reporting, risk management, and benefits realisation arrangements.
- Ensuring compliance with City Region Deal grant conditions, assurance requirements, and governance expectations.

## Resource Implications

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### Financial Details

The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report.

This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes ✓

Finance Officers have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes ✓

### Staffing

The full implications on staffing are set out in the report. Yes ✓

- Delivery of the Action Plan will be coordinated through the Regional Programme Management Office in conjunction with partner organisations and governance groups.

### Exempt Reports

Is this report exempt? Yes  (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No ✓

### Equalities Impact

Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

- The recommendations relate primarily to governance, reporting, and assurance arrangements and are not expected to adversely affect any protected groups.

### Legality

It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Joint Committee is acting within its legal powers. Yes ✓

### Sustainability and Environmental

It has been confirmed that sustainability and environmental issues have been considered within the report. Yes ✓

## Policy Implications

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- The report supports the governance, assurance, and accountability arrangements of the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal.

## Consultations

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None

## Background Papers

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Have you used other documents to compile your report?

Yes  (please list the documents below) No

1. Internal Audit Report – Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal Partnership Level Review (27 March 2026)
2. City Region Deal Governance Framework.

## Appendices

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1. CRD Audit Report – Action Plan (June update)

## Approved by:

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**Neil Harman:** Head of Regional Programme Management Office  
[harmann@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:harmann@stirling.gov.uk)



## 5.1 CRD AUDIT REPORT – ACTION PLAN (JUNE UPDATE)

Recommendations Rating			
<p><b>Critical:</b> A finding that could have a <b>critical impact</b> in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operational performance;</li> <li>monetary or financial statement impact;</li> <li>breach in laws and regulations that could result in material fines or consequences; or</li> <li>the Council's reputation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>High:</b> A finding that could have a <b>significant impact</b> in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operational performance;</li> <li>monetary or financial statement impact;</li> <li>breach in laws and regulations that could result in significant fines or consequences; or</li> <li>the Council's reputation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Medium:</b> finding that could have a <b>moderate impact</b> in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operational performance; or</li> <li>monetary or financial statement impact; or</li> <li>breach in laws and regulations that could result in fines or consequences; or</li> <li>the Council's reputation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Low:</b> finding that could have a <b>minor impact</b> in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operational performance; or</li> <li>monetary or financial statement impact; or</li> <li>breach in laws and regulations with limited consequences; or</li> <li>the Council's reputation.</li> </ul>

No.	Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation (Risk)	Rating	Agreed Management Action	Responsible Owner	Action Completion Date
1.	<p><b>Finding:</b> The Joint Committee has its own Standing Orders. The Standing Orders are the written rules that regulate meeting proceedings, conduct of business, decision-making and membership. The Joint Committee's Terms of Reference forms part of the Standing Orders. Paragraph 72 (Annual Review) of the Standing Orders states they will be reviewed annually and that any proposed changes will be reported to the Joint Committee. In addition, at its meeting on 27 July 2022, the Joint Committee was advised that a full review of the Standing Orders would be presented to its September 2022 meeting. This review was not presented at the September 2022 or subsequent meetings.</p>					
	<p>We recommend that the Joint Committee, with appropriate input from partners, should establish an appropriate timeframe and plan to undertake a full review of the Standing Orders. The revised and updated Standing Orders should be submitted to a future meeting of the Joint Committee for consideration and approval.</p> <p><b>Report Paragraph: 3.11</b></p>	<p>The potential risk that governance arrangements are out of date, not fully documented or do not set out current accountabilities or roles and responsibilities leading to unauthorised decisions or actions.</p>	<p><b>Low</b></p>	<p><b>Recommendation Accepted</b></p> <p>The Joint Committee will undertake a full review of its Standing Orders to ensure they remain current and reflect the governance arrangements for the City Region Deal. The Regional Programme Management Office will coordinate input from partner organisations and prepare a revised draft for consideration by the Joint Committee. The updated Standing Orders will be presented to the Joint Committee for approval.</p>	<p>Head of Regional Programme Management Office</p> <p>Joint Committee Chair</p>	<p>30 September 2026</p>

No.	Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation (Risk)	Rating	Agreed Management Action	Responsible Owner	Action Completion Date
2.	<p><b>Finding:</b> The Joint Committee is the decision-making forum for all City Region Deal matters. A review of the Committee’s meeting documents highlighted that key project information is routinely presented to the Group. The most recent examples of this being reports relating to the approval of different business justification cases. However, Internal Audit noted that there has no programme status report since the March 2024 meeting. In our view, programme status reports are essential, to ensure transparency and provide the Joint Committee with real time visibility of individual project, progress, and risks.</p>					
	<p>We recommend that programme status reporting to each Joint Committee meeting is reintroduced.</p> <p><b>Report Paragraph: 3.15</b></p>	<p>The potential risk that the governance arrangements for the City Region Deal are not operating as intended or as effectively as they should be.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p><b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b></p> <p>Programme status reporting will be reintroduced as a standing agenda item for Joint Committee meetings. The Regional Programme Management Office will develop a standardised programme dashboard summarising project progress, key milestones, risks and issues across the portfolio to provide the Joint Committee with regular oversight of programme delivery.</p>	<p>Head of Regional Programme Management Office</p>	<p>30 September 2026</p>
3.	<p><b>Finding:</b> The Chief Officers’ Group meetings are not formally minuted. Instead, an action log is maintained by the Regional Programme Management Office. From reviewing the action log, we found it difficult to ascertain the level of detail of scrutiny and discussion at the Chief Officers’ Group meetings.</p>					
	<p>We recommend that Chief Officers’ Group meetings should be minuted. The Chief Officers’ Group should ensure that the minutes of meetings clearly record all agreed decisions taken and strategic directions given, and that all agreed actions are added to the action log.</p> <p><b>Report Paragraph: 3.22</b></p>	<p>The potential risk that the governance arrangements for the City Region Deal are not operating as intended or as effectively as they should be.</p>	<p><b>Low</b></p>	<p><b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b></p> <p>A record of the meetings will be introduced with all agreed actions tracked through the action log</p>	<p>Chief Officers’ Group Chair</p>	<p>31 July 2026</p>

No.	Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation (Risk)	Rating	Agreed Management Action	Responsible Owner	Action Completion Date
4.	<b>Finding:</b> The Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary for the University of Stirling is one of the University's voting representatives on the Joint Committee as well as being a member of the Chief Officers' Group.					
	We recommend that, when reviewing the Standing Orders, the Joint Committee should consider whether this practice should be prohibited. <b>Report Paragraph: 3.23</b>	The potential risk that there is inadequate segregation between the decision-making role of the Joint Committee and the strategic management oversight role of the Chief Officers' Group.	<b>Medium</b>	<b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b> This will be considered as part of the review of the Standing Orders and considered by Joint Committee as part of that process	Head of Regional Programme Management Office  Chief Officers' Group Chair	30 September 2026  (Aligned with date of recommendation 1)
5.	<b>Finding:</b> The Chief Officers' Group Terms of Reference states that "COG will be chaired on a rotating annual basis by one of the members. It is a key principle that the chair of COG will not be from the same organisation that chairs the Joint Committee".					
	We recommend the arrangements for chairing the Chief Officers' Group meetings be reviewed to ensure compliance with their Terms of Reference. <b>Report Paragraph: 3.25</b>	The potential risk that the governance arrangements for the City Region Deal are not operating as intended or as effectively as they should be.	<b>Low</b>	<b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b> This recommendation has already been addressed and implemented to ensure the Chief Officer Group and Joint Committee is not chaired by the same Council in the same year	Chief Officers' Group Chair	Complete

No.	Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation (Risk)	Rating	Agreed Management Action	Responsible Owner	Action Completion Date
6.	<p><b>Finding:</b> One of the areas of improvement that the Regional Programme Management Office is in the process of addressing is in relation to improving benefits realisation management, monitoring and tracking processes. Joint Committee minutes record that this topic has been subject to regular discussion. The latest version of the strategic improvement plan records the status of work in progress as well as work completed to date. It also records that the planned solution (using Microsoft's Power BI application) will be a report 'dashboard' across the programme.</p>					
	<p>We recommend a target date should be set for the introduction of the benefits realisation reporting dashboard by the Regional Programme Management Office.</p> <p><b>Report Paragraph: 3.39</b></p>	<p>The potential risk that tangible and intangible benefits across the City Region Deal Programme are not fully understood and identified or subject to regular scrutiny.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>	<p><b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b></p> <p>The Regional Programme Management Office is currently progressing improvements to programme benefits realisation monitoring through the development of a reporting dashboard (this includes learning from Benefits Realisation Officer at Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal). A target date will be agreed for implementation and the dashboard will be used to support reporting to the Chief Officers' Group and the Joint Committee.</p> <p>To underpin this action the Regional Programme Management Office will brief the Joint Committee on the Benefits Realisation Methodology for creating our City Region Deal Benefits Realisation Framework in Spring 2026 with a subsequent report submitted for approval at Joint Committee in June 2026. This will directly underpin the introduction of the reporting dashboard in September 2026.</p>	<p>Head of Regional Programme Management Office</p>	<p>30 September 2026</p> <p>(Aligned with date of recommendation 2)</p>

No.	Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation (Risk)	Rating	Agreed Management Action	Responsible Owner	Action Completion Date
7.	<p><b>Finding:</b> There is no City Region Deal Risk and Issue Management Strategy (the Strategy) in place. A Strategy should articulate the City Region Deal's approach to risk management, set out the relevant responsibilities and accountabilities and provide guidance on the recording and reporting of risks and issues.</p>					
	<p>We recommend a City Region Deal Risk and Issue Management Strategy is prepared and agreed with the Chief Officers' Group. The City Region Deal Risk and Issue Management Strategy should include the requirement for reporting of key programme risks to Joint Committee and specify the frequency of reporting to the Joint Committee.</p> <p><b>Report Paragraph: 3.49</b></p>	<p>The potential risk that the approach to risk management is not fully documented leading to an inconsistent or fragmented approach</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p><b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b></p> <p>A City Region Deal Risk and Issue Management Strategy will be developed by the Regional Programme Management Office and presented to the Chief Officers' Group for review and approval. The Strategy will set out roles, responsibilities and reporting arrangements, including the escalation and reporting of key programme risks to the Joint Committee.</p>	<p>Head of Regional Programme Management Office</p>	<p>30 September 2026</p>

No.	Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation (Risk)	Rating	Agreed Management Action	Responsible Owner	Action Completion Date
8.	<p><b>Finding:</b> In relation to the content and format of the programme risk and issue register, we found the wording is clear and consistent with use of inherent and residual risk scoring and early warning indicators. We identified points in relation to the 'description of risk', 'accountable' and 'strategic controls / mitigating actions' columns.</p>					
	<p>We recommend consideration is given to including the following in the programme risk and issue register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the risk descriptions are clear for cause and risk event but unclear on what the impact is if the risk event occurs. The risk descriptions should include what the impact is;</li> <li>the individual risks are assigned to groups (either Chief Officers' Group or Senior Responsible Officers). It is generally best practice to assign individual responsibility. We would suggest that accountability and ownership would be improved by Chief Officers' Group being the register owner and named individuals being specific risk owners; and</li> <li>the individual risks have several strategic controls / mitigating actions associated with them. It was difficult to assess the progress of strategic controls / mitigating actions and whether they are functioning as intended. This could be improved by amending the register to include a target date for the action and a percentage towards completion.</li> </ul> <p><b>Report Paragraph: 3.50</b></p>	<p>The potential risk that risk impact, risk ownership or the completion of risk actions was unclear, leading to programme risk management arrangements not operating as effectively as they should be.</p>	<p><b>Low</b></p>	<p><b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b></p> <p>The programme risk register will be reviewed and updated to enhance clarity of risk descriptions, identify named risk owners and include target dates and progress updates for mitigating actions where appropriate.</p>	<p>Head of Regional Programme Management Office</p>	<p>30 June 2026</p>
	<p><b>Finding:</b> The steps followed when processing, reviewing and approving grant claims are not formally documented in a guidance note.</p>					

No.	Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation (Risk)	Rating	Agreed Management Action	Responsible Owner	Action Completion Date
9.	<p>We recommend the Regional Programme Management Office should document the roles and responsibilities of the partners, Regional Programme Management Office, Section 95 Officer, Chief Officers' Group and the Scottish Government in relation to processing, reviewing and approving grant claims. This should include the process for challenging, escalating and investigating any exceptions.</p> <p><b>Report Paragraph: 3.57</b></p>	<p>The potential risk that the absence of a documented process leads to inappropriate or inconsistent administration and decision-making, including over grant applications and payments.</p>	Low	<p><b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b></p> <p>The Regional Programme Management Office will document the existing processes and responsibilities associated with the preparation, review and approval of grant claims, including escalation arrangements for any issues identified. This will ensure the process is clearly understood and consistently applied.</p>	<p>Head of Regional Programme Management Office</p>	30 June 2026
10.	<p><b>Finding:</b> There are no additional risk-based sample checks on the grant claims process. The introduction of risk-based checks would enhance the existing internal control framework. These checks should be focussed on ensuring for all high value entries on the listing of transactions, that the partner has adequate documentation (such as a supplier's invoices, an approved purchase order or a contractor's schedule of payments) available and that the expenditure was valid and consistent with the project aims.</p>					
	<p>We recommend the Regional Programme Management Office should introduce checks on a sample basis over the grant claim forms.</p> <p><b>Report Paragraph: 3.59</b></p>	<p>The potential risk that there is inadequate supporting documentation available leading to incorrect or inadequate grant claims.</p>	Low	<p><b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b></p> <p>The Regional Programme Management Office will introduce proportionate risk-based sample checks of grant claim submissions to provide additional assurance over supporting documentation and eligibility of expenditure. The approach will focus on higher-value transactions and will be incorporated into the documented grant claim process.</p>	<p>Head of Regional Programme Management Office</p>	30 June 2026

No.	Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation (Risk)	Rating	Agreed Management Action	Responsible Owner	Action Completion Date
11.	<b>Finding:</b> There is a requirement within the City Region Deal Grant Offer letter that an Internal Audit review should be undertaken every second year as a minimum. This Internal Audit review, in year six of the City Region Deal, is the first review by the Accountable Body's Internal Audit Team.					
	<p>We recommend the Accountable Body's Audit Service Manager confirms the allocation of Internal Audit resources for City Region Deal activities to meet the requirement for an internal audit review every two years.</p> <p><b>Report Paragraph: 3.70</b></p>	<p>The potential risk that the City Region Deal's Internal Audit arrangements do not comply with the terms and conditions of the grant.</p>	<p><b>Low</b></p>	<p><b><u>Recommendation Accepted</u></b></p> <p>The Accountable Body's Audit Service Manager will confirm arrangements to ensure that internal audit reviews of City Region Deal activities are scheduled at least every two years in line with the Grant Offer Letter requirements.</p>	<p>Audit Service Manager (Stirling Council)</p>	<p>30 September 2026</p>