

## **The New Deal – Verity House Agreement**

**Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director, Place**

### **Report for Information**

#### **1 Recommendation**

The Council are invited to note the new deal signed between the Scottish Government and local authorities on 30 June, 2023.

#### **2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary**

This report advises members that the First Minister, Humza Yousaf, has signed a deal between the Scottish Government and Scotland's local authorities, named as the Verity House Agreement after the headquarters building of CoSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) which represents all of Scotland's councils.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-deal-local-government-partnership-agreement/>

**Date:** 21 July 2023

**Report Contact:** Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place

**Email:** [kevin.anderson@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.anderson@midlothian.gov.uk)

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 First Minister, Humza Yousaf, has signed a deal with Scotland's councils that aims to reset the relationship between Scottish Government and local authorities. The Verity House Agreement has been named after the headquarters of CoSLA, which represents all of Scotland's councils.
- 3.2 The deal establishes a default position of no ringfencing of funds, which has previously seen the Scottish Government determine how councils spend the allocated resources.
- 3.3 It commits to build a stronger relationship between the parties with mutual trust and respect at its core. Under the agreement councils and the government will work together to make progress on three key priorities:
  - tackling poverty
  - achieving a just transition to net-zero
  - the provision of sustainable public services
- 3.4 The new agreement aims to set out a vision for a more collaborative approach to delivering shared priorities.
- 3.5 As part of this process the First Minister will meet the CoSLA President at least twice a year, with more regular, informal, meetings taking place between key cabinet members and CoSLA's leadership.
- 3.6 It is expected that by the end of September this year improved engagement between councils and the Scottish Government will be well underway, ahead of the draft budget being announced in December.
- 3.7 The deal promises that the powers and funding local government has will be reviewed regularly to ensure adequacy and alignment with the effective delivery of outcomes.

### **4. Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)**

#### **4.1 Resource**

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

#### **4.2 Digital**

There are no digital implications related to this report.

#### 4.3 **Risk**

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

#### 4.4 **Ensuring Equalities**

An equalities impact assessment has not been required in connection with this report.

#### 4.5 **Additional Report Implications**

See Appendix A

## Appendix A - Additional Report Implications

### A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Not applicable

### A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

### A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

### A.4 Delivering Best Value

There are no direct implications related to this report.

### A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The report does not directly relate to involving communities.

### A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Not applicable

### A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not applicable

### A.8 Supporting a Sustainable Development

Not applicable