

**Economy and Fair Work Committee  
Wednesday 11 December 2024  
33<sup>rd</sup> Meeting, 2024 (Session 6)**

## **City Region and Regional Growth Deals – Note by the Clerk**

### **Background**

1. City Region Deals and Regional Growth Deals are funding deals agreed between the Scottish and UK governments, and local partners. They are designed to bring about long-term improvements to regional economies, attract investment, create new jobs, and accelerate inclusive economic growth.
2. There are currently 12 [City Region and Regional Growth Deals in Scotland](#), each at different stages of their life cycles. The first Deal established in Scotland was announced in 2014 for the Glasgow City Region. The most recent is the Falkirk Growth Deal, which was signed in November 2024.

### **Previous scrutiny**

3. In 2018, the Local Government and Communities Committee undertook an inquiry on City Region Deals. That report can be found [here](#).
4. In 2020, the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland published a joint report on city region and growth deals. In June 2023, they published a further briefing looking at [progress made against recommendations in the report](#).
5. This Committee agreed to undertake scrutiny but delayed launching an inquiry due to the Scottish Affairs Committee having launched an own inquiry. Following dissolution of the UK Parliament in 2024, the Scottish Affairs Committee's inquiry fell.

### **Inquiry Remit and Approach**

6. This Committee is now proceeding with its own inquiry to consider—
  - implementation and effectiveness of deals;
  - how deals have contributed to addressing local issues; and
  - how deals have supported development and inclusive growth.

The Committee's call for written views ran from 20 September to 14 November 2024. [Thirty-eight responses were received](#). These are currently being analysed and summarised by SPICe. A paper will be brought to the Committee to invite consideration of written submissions and whether to invite

further witnesses to give evidence. The UK Government [submitted a response](#) and is expected to give evidence at a meeting in the New Year.

7. Sessions are structured as follows—

Session 1 – an overview of the Deals;  
Session 2 – Mature Deals;  
Session 3 – Recent Deals;  
Session 4 – Supporting local economies and supply chains;  
Session 5 – Local communities and devolved decision making; and  
Session 6 – Session with the UK Government  
Session 7 – Final session with the Scottish Government.

8. This is the third evidence session. The Committee will hear from —

- Malcolm Bennie, Director of Place Services, Falkirk Growth Deal;
- David McDowall, Head of Economic Growth, Ayrshire Growth Deal;
- Anne Murray, Chief Officer, Economic & Community Regeneration, Islands Growth Deal; and
- Rick O'Farrell, Director, Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

9. [Ayrshire Growth Deal](#), [Comhairle nan Eilean Siar](#), [Orkney Islands Council](#), [Shetland Islands Council](#), and [Scottish Borders Council](#) contributed to the Committee's call for views.

**Clerk to the Committee  
December 2024**