

Annex 8: Tay Cities Region Deal Communication Protocol

For Member Authorities, partners, the PMO and the UK and Scottish Governments.

Partner Commitment

This document sets out an agreed framework for communication protocols around the Tay Cities Region Deal (the Deal). It is designed to ensure:

- areas of responsibility and working practices across the partners are clearly defined
- effectiveness, clarity and timeliness of action when matters concerning one or more partners are deemed likely to be of public/media interest; and
- good partner working relationships.

Scope

This protocol covers proactive and reactive communications activities in relation to the Deal by the PMO, Member Authorities (Angus, Dundee City, Fife, and Perth and Kinross councils), Scottish and UK Governments, and other partners, with communications defined as:

- press releases and written statements issued to the print, online and broadcast media;
- interviews and opinion pieces provided to the print, online and broadcast media;
- briefings, interviews, verbal statements and press conferences;
- publicity material, including posters, brochures, leaflets, newsletters and reports;
- media information, blogs and commentary released across each organisation's social media;
- broadcast interviews, documentaries and public interest programmes;
- information published on each organisation's website; and
- responses to FOIs, political and customer enquiries.

Lead Organisations

The Tay Cities PMO, with Deal PR and Comms Group, will together lead on/sign off Deal programme communications in relation to output from all committees and governance groups. Each lead partner has overarching responsibility for leading on both proactive and reactive communications and communications strategy relating to their respective programmes/projects, with recognition that additional input and support from multiple partners may be required on joint programmes/projects.

Scottish and UK Governments in Relation to the Deal

The UK and Scottish Governments will be engaged as early as possible in every Deal project milestone, to allow opportunities for attendance at events/launches and inclusion of media quotes.

The PMO and the Chair of the PR & Comms Group will act as a liaison between individual projects and the Deal partners and will be the primary points of contact for the UK and Scottish Governments. As such, the PMO and Chair of the PR & Comms Group should be sighted on all potential project and programme level communications activities in order to ensure the UK and Scottish Governments receive sufficient notice of, and opportunity to contribute to, any media opportunities, visits, or events. Government partners will aim to advise the PMO and Chair of the PR & Comms Group in advance about proposed or planned media or visits by politicians or senior officers connected to the Deal with sufficient notice.

If a member authority or partner intends to invite either the UK or Scottish Government to an event or media opportunity connected to the Deal, or to offer space for a quote in a news release, the same offer must be made to both Governments.

Spokespeople

The agreed spokespeople are:

- For the Deal programme: the Joint Committee Chair, where appropriate with UK and Scottish governments.
- For individual Deal projects: Lead Member Authority or Partner will appoint, as appropriate. Where a project is carried out by two or more partners, it is acceptable to include quotes from the relevant spokesperson for each organisation.
- Where the subject crosses themes or more generally relates to the partnership, the Joint Committee Chair will be quoted.

Process

A Deal PR & Communications Group shall meet bi-monthly to:

- populate and agree a communications planner and upcoming activity;
- update the communications documents set out below; and
- to discuss the handling of any forthcoming communications opportunities that have arisen since the previous meeting

The responsibility of chairing of the Communications Group will rotate around local authority and university partners on an annual basis from the start of each calendar year.

Media Activity/Releases

- all media releases or briefing notes relating to the Deal should be prepared by the lead partner of a programme/project and shared in advance with the PMO and all communications leads;
- Media Releases relating to the Deal should be posted promptly on <https://www.taycities.co.uk/> by the Deal PR and Comms Group;
- in instances of sensitive, or conflicting, positions communication leads representing each organisation undertake to keep each other informed on a 'no surprises' basis. Any confidentiality or embargo relating to this information will naturally be upheld;
- all media releases **must** mention where projects have been funded by the UK and/or Scottish Government, as well as any other funding partners, through the Deal. This must be included in the body of the release, not in the background, and must be placed early in the release so as to ensure it is picked up in coverage;
- where appropriate, final releases should be shared with partners for wider ongoing circulation; and
- contact details for the partner communications leads are provided below.

Media Enquiries and FOI Requests

The PMO and Deal PR and Comms Group will together lead on responding to media enquiries relating to the Deal. Member authorities/partners should direct relevant enquiries to the PMO and Deal PR and Comms Group. The PMO will lead on FOI enquiries relating to the Deal. Media enquiries relating to individual projects should be dealt with by the relevant lead organisation. However, all partners should be advised of and should share responses issued to the media, including relevant FOI enquiries. FOI and media enquiries will also be discussed standing agenda item at Deal Communication Group meetings.

Branding

Any physical manifestation of a project funded by the Tay Cities Region Deal should be appropriately branded with TCD logo and UK Government and Scottish Government logos where applicable (i.e. where they have provided funding) including signage, and construction hoarding. Where both government logos appear together they should sit alongside each other and be of equal size. This branding must also apply to all public facing documents or comms with relation to the Tay Cities Region Deal and its supported projects, e.g. press notices, websites, newsletters etc. Lead partners have responsibility for the creation and approval of any logos required for their project or programme and should ensure any other partners linked to the project or programme are consulted on these.

Communication Planner

The Communication Planner provides a forward plan of proposed communications activities by all partners and will be updated by the PMO ahead of each Deal Communication Group meeting. The Planner should also provide details as to the release of public information about the Deal, such as where meeting papers will be made publicly available ahead of meetings. Comms leads should inform other partners and the PMO in advance and at the earliest opportunity of potential or actual media communication activities that are not recorded on the Planner. An update on PR & Comms activity will be shared at the TCD Management Group meetings on a monthly basis.

Photo Opportunities

These will be organised by the relevant lead organisation on the project. All partner communications leads must be informed in advance and will bear responsibility for inviting any relevant representative from their organisation to take part.

External Speaker Events

Where representatives from partner organisations are approached to be involved in external speaker events related to the TCD these should (where possible) be flagged to the PR and Communications Group at the earliest opportunity to ensure the PMO and Management Group is aware. Links to external speaker events will not be added to the TCD website but may be supported on the TCD social media channels where there is a reasonable case to do so.

Communications Documents

The partners agree to use the following communication documents in order to achieve consistency in messaging. These are:

- the **Core Script ('Boilerplate')**, which provides a short description of the Deal, how it came about, what it will do, what it hopes to achieve, and relevant details of timeframes and investment;
- the **Story Matrix**, which sets out the regional challenges, the solutions, and the proof points/ case studies of what has been achieved through the Deal. The PMO will manage the Story Matrix and it is the responsibility of all partners to populate it and keep it up to date, so that it can be reviewed and discussed at Deal Communications Group meetings; and
- the **Q & A**, which will capture frequently asked questions and agreed responses.

Amendments to the above suite of documents should be made in consultation with the other partners.

Escalation

If an issue arises with the partnership, the partners will work together to agree a communications strategy, messaging and spokespeople before any communication about the issue is made. If the issue is raised with one partner by a third party the partner will only offer a holding response before

immediately conferring with the other partners about the appropriate course of action.

Review

This protocol will be reviewed annually by the Deal Communications Group, for discussion/approval by the Tay Cities Management Group.