

EUROPEAN ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

2012 - 2017



INTRODUCTION

The UK's membership of the European Union offers both opportunities and challenges to Aberdeenshire. On the one hand, the freedom of movement of goods, services, capital and people support economic development in the area, which are further enhanced by access to extensive European funding programmes. On the other, the need to maintain a level playing field across the EU has led to an ever-increasing amount of legislation emerging from Brussels which can affect Aberdeenshire both positively and negatively. In order to position Aberdeenshire to take advantage of the opportunities and mitigate any negative effects of EU membership, Aberdeenshire Council has pursued a policy of proactive engagement with European matters. Officers, including a dedicated European Team based within Infrastructure Services are tasked with supporting the Council's European engagement approach which is focused on three main priorities:

1) Funding

Draw down European funds for projects which support the Council's priorities and objectives by:

- Influencing the development of new European funding programmes set to run from 2014-20 to ensure that these meet the needs and opportunities of Aberdeenshire;
- Building knowledge and expertise on European funding programmes to identify funding opportunities for projects;
- Communicating and publicising the availability of European funding programmes within Aberdeenshire Council;
- Developing partnerships for projects, locally, nationally and internationally;
- Co-ordinating, developing and submitting applications for European funding from Aberdeenshire Council;
- Co-ordinating and submitting claims for Aberdeenshire Council projects;
- Providing advice on eligible expenditure and rules relating to European funding programmes to Council services.

2) Policies

Monitor, analyse and influence emerging European policies to ensure that they meet the needs of Aberdeenshire and mitigate potentially negative impacts by:

- Identifying potential policy developments from the European Commission work plan;
- Analysing and interpreting proposals from the European Commission to identify challenges and opportunities for Aberdeenshire;
- Communicating policy developments within Aberdeenshire Council;
- Providing advice to Council Working Groups and Policy Committees on policy developments, including identifying ways of influencing such developments;
- Communicating the Council's position to key decision makers including the European Commission, European Parliament and the UK and Scottish Governments.

3) External Organisations

Participate actively in external organisations which assist the Council to access European funding and influence European policy developments by:

- Co-ordinating the Council's engagement with the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions, North Sea Commission and East of Scotland European Consortium;
- Interpreting, analysing and influencing policy positions of external organisations;
- Participating in meetings and Working Groups of external organisations;
- Providing briefings, advice and logistical support to Elected Members to facilitate their active participation in meetings of external organisations;
- Communicating the work of external organisations to Council Working Groups and Policy Committees;
- Networking within external organisations to build partnerships for European-funded projects.

INTERNAL STRUCTURE

Aberdeenshire Council's European work is primarily co-ordinated through a European Member Officer Working Group (EMOWG) and a European Officer Group (EOG). These Groups aim to facilitate a joined-up approach to European engagement by bringing together representatives from different Council Services, Policy and Area Committees. Members of the Groups are responsible for communicating the work of the Groups to colleagues where appropriate. Members of the Groups are also responsible for communicating the views from their Policy/Area Committees and Services to the Groups where appropriate.

In addition, newsletters and bulletins will be produced by the European Team and issued to Elected Members and Officers. These will be issued monthly and alternate between a short bulletin containing funding opportunities and a larger newsletter which will also contain updates on the Council's European work, EU policy developments, consultations and training events. Moreover, workshops on EU funding opportunities will be provided across Aberdeenshire to publicise the availability of funding.

STRATEGIC FIT

The Council's European work must take account of a wide range of local, national and European strategies, including:

- Aberdeenshire Council Strategic Priorities
- Aberdeenshire Community Plan
- Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future's Economic Manifesto
- The Scottish Government Economic Strategy
- The UK National Reform Plan
- The North Sea Region 2020 Strategy
- The Europe 2020 Strategy
- Aberdeenshire Council's Economic Development Strategy

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Acquis Communautaire: EU legal framework

Axis 4: Priority of the European Fisheries fund for coastal/fishing dependent areas

CAP: Common Agricultural Policy

CFP: Common Fisheries Policy

CoR: Committee of the Regions

CPMR: Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions – external organisation

DG: Directorate General, department of the European Commission

EAFRD: European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

EMFF: European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

EOG: European Officer Group

EMOWG: European Member Officer Working Group

ESEC: East of Scotland European Consortium

ESF: European Social Fund

ERDF: European Regional Development Fund

EU: European Union

FP7: Present EU programme for research and innovation

Horizon 2020: Proposed EU programme for research and innovation

ICT: Information and Communications Technologies

INTERREG: Funding programmes to encourage co-operation between countries

LEADER: Bottom-up community-led delivery approach for EU rural funds.

LIFE+: EU environment programme

KIMO: Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation

MEP: Member of the European Parliament

NATURA 2000: Protected geographical areas under EU environmental legislation

NSC: North Sea Commission – external organisation

R&D: Research and Development

R&I: Research and Innovation

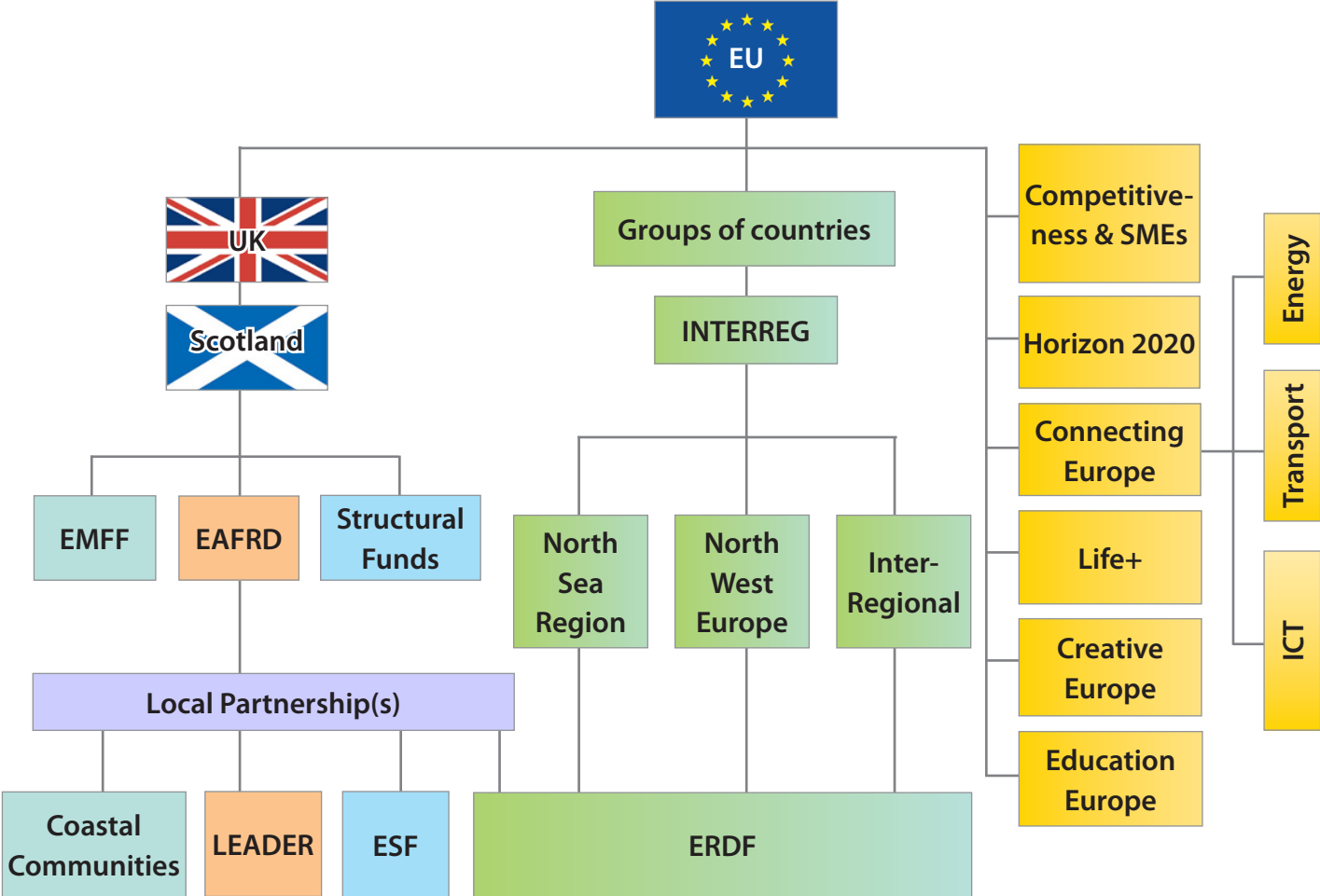
SME: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

TEN-E: Trans-European Energy Networks

TEN-T: Trans-European Transport Networks

Transnational: Project/programme covering a number of different EU countries

Overview of European Funding Opportunities



PROJECT EXAMPLES 2007-13

European Funding Awarded to Projects in Aberdeenshire (2007-2012)

Fund	Project Cost	European Grant
European Fisheries Fund (including Axis 4)	£28,829,540	£13,539,716
European Regional Development Fund	£7,175,893	£1,984,582
European Social Fund	£857,338	£382,138
INTERREG North Sea Region Programme	£981,034*	£490,517*
LEADER	£22,267,645	£6,717,891
Lifelong Learning Programme	£184,319	£184,319
Total	£60,295,768	£23,299,162

Work 4U – £270,000 of ESF money has been secured to support 1,260 job ready unemployed people and disadvantaged workers into sustainable employment.

Aquarius – €214,454 of ERDF INTERREG funding to find and implement sustainable, integrated land-water management through engaging with land managers.

Real Time Passenger Information – £191,879 of ERDF money has been secured to deliver real time information on bus services through different media such as the internet, mobile services and display screens in key locations throughout Aberdeenshire.

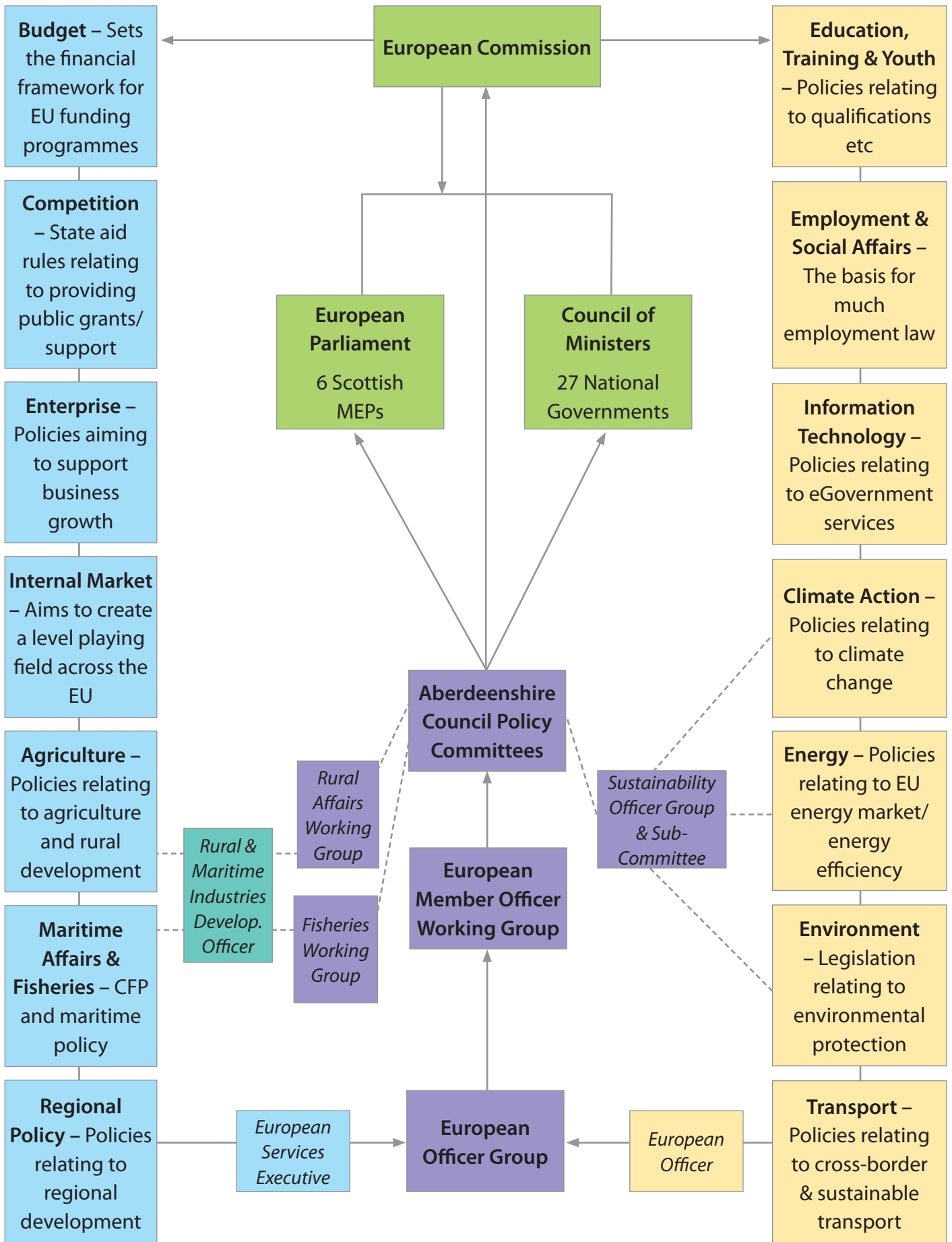
Cruise Gateway – €57,625 of ERDF INTERREG funding to develop the North Sea as a sustainable cruise destination of its own right.

East Coast Renewables – Renewable Energy Supply Chain Development - £57,646 of ERDF money has been secured to assist local businesses to benefit from Scotland's emerging renewable energy sector.

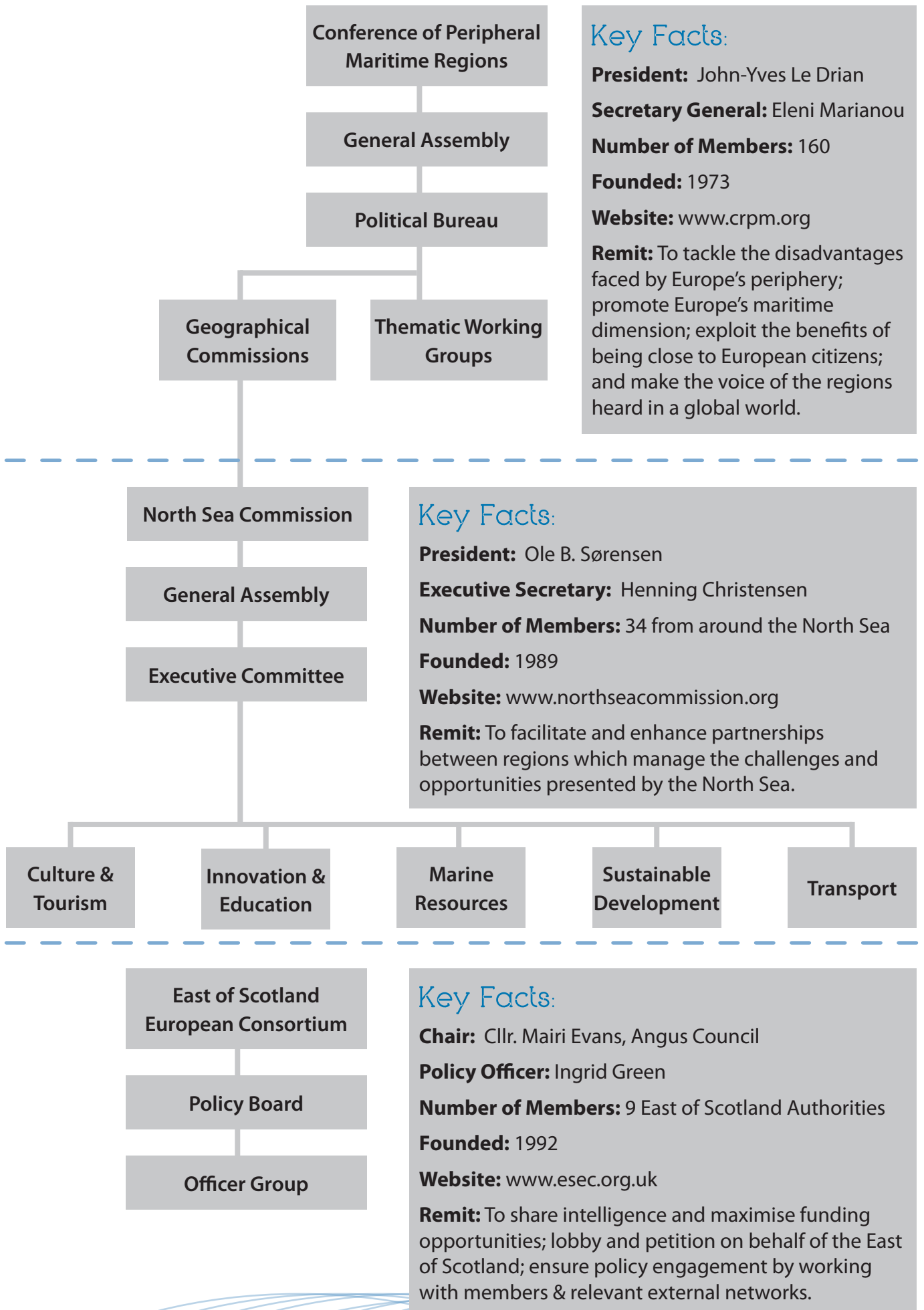
StratMos – €303,078 of ERDF INTERREG funding to promote and facilitate shift of cargo from road to seabased intermodal transport, and improve accessibility within the North Sea Region by supporting the implementation of Motorway of the Sea (MoS) and related transport networks in an integrated logistical chain.

Tourism Business Support – £39,380 of ERDF money has been secured to develop the tourism sector, including marketing the Deeside Way and help local businesses to benefit from the opportunities offered by the ancestral tourism market.

Overview of European Policy Engagement



Overview of External Organisations



REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions		
General Assembly	Elected Member:	Cllr. Jim Gifford
	Officer:	European Services Executive
Political Bureau	Cllr. Drew Hendry, Highland Council	

North Sea Commission		
General Assembly	Elected Members:	Cllrs. Argyle and Kitts-Hayes
	Officer:	European Services Executive
Executive Committee	Cllr. Martin Kitts-Hayes	
Culture & Tourism Group	Elected Member:	Cllr. Tom Malone
	Officer:	Representative from Economic Development
Innovation & Education	Elected Member:	Cllr. Bryan Stuart
	Officer:	Representative from Economic Development
Marine Resources	Elected Member:	Cllr. Martin Kitts-Hayes
	Officer:	Rural and Maritime Industries Development Officer
Sustainable Development	Elected Member:	Cllr. Joanna Strathdee
	Officer:	Sustainability & Climate Change Co-ordinator
Transport	Elected Member:	Cllr. Peter Argyle
	Officer:	Strategy Manager, Transportation

East of Scotland European Consortium		
Policy Board	Elected Member:	Cllr. Martin Kitts-Hayes
	Substitute Member:	Cllr. Alison Evison
	Officer:	European Services Executive
Officer Group	Officer:	European Officer

European Member Officer Working Group

Remit

- To promote the interests of Aberdeenshire and Aberdeenshire Council with regards to European policies, funding programmes & external organisations.
- To provide advice to the Council's Policy Committees with regards to European policies, funding programmes and external organisations.
- To provide a forum for dialogue between Elected Members and Officers on European matters.

Main Tasks

- Considering the potential impact of EU policy developments on the Aberdeenshire area & Council Services and preparing advice for the Council's Policy Committees.
- Co-ordinating the Council's participation in external European organisations. Communicating information on funding opportunities, policies and external organisations to Council committees and Elected Members.
- Providing feedback from meetings of external European organisations Council committees and Elected Members.
- Liaising with Members of the European Parliament and other decision-makers in the European Union.

Membership

Position	Member
Provost	Provost Jill Webster
Leader of the Council	Cllr. Jim Gifford
Deputy Leader of the Council	Cllr. Martin Kitts-Hayes
Chair of ISC	Cllr. Peter Argyle
Vice-Chair of ISC	Cllr. Alan Buchan
Chair - Marr	Cllr. Moira Ingleby
Chair - Garioch	Cllr. Sheena Lonchay
Chair - Formartine	Cllr. Rob Merson
Chair - Banff & Buchan	Cllr. John Cox
Chair – Kincardine & Mearns	Cllr. Carl Nelson
Chair - Buchan	Cllr. Stuart Pratt
Admin – European Interest	Cllr. Peter Bellarby
SNP – European Interest	Cllr. Geva Blackett
Other – European Interest	Cllr. Alison Evison
North Sea Commission Group Member	Cllr. Tom Malone
North Sea Commission Group Member	Cllr. Joanna Strathdee
North Sea Commission Group Member	Cllr. Bryan Stuart
Director of Infrastructure Services	Stephen Archer
Head of Economic Development	Belinda Miller
Industry Sector Manager	Roddy Matheson
European Services Executive	Martin Brebner
European Officer	Stuart Bews

European Officer Group

Remit

- To facilitate a corporate approach to the Council’s European engagement agenda.
- To provide information and advice to the European Member / Officer Working Group and Council Policy Committees.
- To evaluate potential projects against Council priorities.

Main Tasks

- Applying the Council’s Corporate Approval Process for European-funded projects.
- Discussing and developing project ideas with a view to securing European funding.
- Communicating project information (implementation, claims, outputs etc.) to Council services and the European Member Officer Working Group.
- Communicating information on funding opportunities, policies and external organisations to Council services.
- Considering the potential impact of EU policy developments on the Aberdeenshire area and Council services and preparing advice for the European Member Officer Working Group.
- Disseminating information from external European organisations to Council services and the European Member Officer Working Group.

Membership

Service
Area Managers
Community Planning
Corporate Services - Finance
Education, Learning and Leisure
Housing & Social Work
Infrastructure Services - Economic Development
Infrastructure Services - Transportation
Infrastructure Services – Property
Infrastructure Services - Planning

Corporate Project Approval Process

