

Glasgow and Europe

It is a year since we last met to come together and celebrate Europe Day. Began by former Lord Provost Eva Bolander, I am delighted that the current Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren has continued this and welcomed us again for the second year with a civic reception. This is also an opportunity to share with you what the City Government has been doing since we last met.

Community

A key outcome has been supporting and working with the EU Citizens Forum. As you can see from the slides, we have been looking at various statistics to identify not only the impact of European institutions and EU member states on business and trade in Glasgow. But also, who - despite the hurdles of the EU Settlement Scheme - has made their home here including those who did not have to go through this process.

Other Europeans from Ukraine who are also now residing in Glasgow and long-standing communities from Ireland, we are operating on the estimate of 15% of Glasgow's population are Europeans. Now of course, a number of years we were all European citizens – and of course Glasgow still sees itself as a European city. Whilst many in the UK may be speculating about the next General Election, there is another election we should also seriously engage. The European elections are a month away and as you can see a conservative 8% of Glasgow's population can vote in these. That why we are encouraging all Glaswegians who can do so to exercise their democratic rights to do so. The Future of Europe will also shape the future of Glasgow. And we are invested in ensuring that at every opportunity Europe knows they have a friend here.

Commitment

As well as committing to work with European citizens and stakeholders actively we have also continued to highlight European issues within the Council and across its workstreams. After Europe Day last year, I moved a motion with Councillor Bolander – one of a number since Brexit since 2017, that underline our commitment to Europe and celebrate our European connections. And we have continued to put this commitment into action.

Co-operation

One of our main vehicles for doing so has been the Eurocities network. Last year, I shared how we had been the Vice Chair of one of its six forums – the Social Affairs Forum. We had also put ourselves forward for a new two-year term as Chair. And on the after the last Europe Day civic reception, I learned that we had been successful – no other city was running against us! Of course, as a politician I can only say... that I wish every election campaign was like that! But the fact that no one ran against Glasgow is a tribute to the hard work by Council officers in its working groups – from homelessness to social innovation. And those sharing knowledge, raising the profile and creating opportunities for Glasgow in the other for a – Environment, Digital, Mobility, Culture and Economic Development. And its testament to the high regard Glasgow is held in by cities and leaders across Europe.

Conversation

Being elected chair of the Social Affairs Forum was not a coronation and had to be confirmed at the Eurocities AGM which took place last summer during the Brussels Urban Summit (BUS). BUS brought together three leading global networks – Eurocities, Metropolis and OECD Champion Mayors. Leader of the Council Susan Aitken spoke at a number of events as did I at the launch of the Taskforce on Gender Equality of which Glasgow is the Vice Chair alongside Nantes and supporting Vienna as lead. Under, our Leader, Susan Aitken, we spearheaded the networks Mayors Alliance for the European Green Deal at COP26 in Glasgow. Glasgow's Depute Leader, Ricky Bell is the dual UK/ Europe City Ambassador for Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance. Another colleague, Anne McTaggart, City Convener for Communities and Equalities participated in the Belgian Presidency event in Mechelen regarding local Government Approaches to Diversity. Councillor Angus Millar is discussing a potential Horizon Europe bid on future transport and mobility systems to inform our ambitious inform our own ambitious Clyde Metro plans and wider strategies. Our colleague, Councillor Paul Leinster, was recently in Rotterdam sharing Glasgow's expertise and new digital strategy. And a few weeks ago, Glasgow's Lord Provost Jacqueline McLaren, the Leader and me met with the EU Ambassador to the UK Pedro Serrano alongside the EU Citizens Forum.

Climate and Culture

Through our participation in the network, we have secured Glasgow's participation in a number of projects. We will be reporting to Committee soon on how Glasgow was selected as one of ten other non-member cities to participate in the EU Mission 100 Climate Neutral & Smart Cities due to our global leadership and record on this. And how we are hopeful of securing New European Bauhaus Funding initiative which connects the European Green Deal to our living spaces with the aim of transformation of the built environment and associated lifestyles at the local level. We have also secured participation in another Horizon Europe project Food Trails as a Cascade City and are matched with the Groningen, in the Netherlands. And I'm delighted to share breaking news that we were selected by the European Commission to participate as one of 10 European cities for being leaders for innovative practice in the European Heritage Hub - alongside peers from Barcelona to Stockholm. Glasgow has been chosen as first host of the projects three visits in early July. This will be situated in Europe's largest urban park, Pollok Park and European Museum of the Year nominee the Burrell Collection.

Competition

Glasgow was honoured to be the first city to be named the European Capital of Sport for the second time in 2023. One of our many European accolades. However, it is not just in sport we excel but business. Exports to the EU are estimated to directly support 130,000 jobs in Scotland, with 20,000 of those in Glasgow and another 20,000 in the greater Glasgow region. The EU is a particularly important market for Glasgow's professional services sector. Glasgow is the number one large European city for strategy in attracting overseas investment, according to a new ranking released by fDi Intelligence. In addition to the spot for its foreign direct investment strategies in the European Cities & Regions of the Future 2024, Glasgow

also ranked fifth for connectivity and 10th for business friendliness. fDi Intelligence, an investment insights provider that's part of the FT group, said Glasgow has leapt to number one due to the city's "approach to innovation" which "has been forged in partnerships between academia, industry, government and local communities." This is a recognition of the impact of the City Government's economic policies, which have transformed Glasgow's approach to inward investment and put us in the top rank of European cities to attract high quality jobs and generate growth all our citizens can share in.

Children

Recently, Brussels offered the UK a 'backpackers and baristas' deal on free movement. A matter we discussed with the EU Ambassador the very day it was made. The European Commission proposed a 'youth mobility' scheme that would let 18- to 30-year-olds from anywhere across the EU, for up to four years, move to the UK for work, travel or study. As a city which has always welcomed young Europeans and promotes the mobility of our own young people we very much welcomed this proposal. However, by the time of the EUNIC In Short, Europe, film festival at the GFT the UK Government and Leader of the Opposition had both refused this hand of friendship! EU couldnae make it up! Regardless, of this rejection Glasgow will do its utmost to promote the international outlook and mobility of its young people which is why our Education Services have developed a new international education plan. European connections and strengthen shared European values. One of its 4 Grand Challenges is the *FUTURE OF YOUTH MOBILITY*. How can we enable our young people to broaden their perspectives, through supporting opportunities to study or experience other ways of living and working? To promote this I have been working with our City Convener for Education, Councillor Christina Cannon, and our Education Services and the European Parliaments Ambassador Schools Programme. And I'm delighted to share that Clevedon Secondary school – which many of our Lord Provost's young constituents attend will be the first Glasgow school to engage and explore how they can continue to forge European connections.

A Learning City

Glasgow is a resilient city, famed for its bold innovation, curiosity, and appetite for applied learning.

Glasgow has been at the forefront of embracing digital inclusion and connected learning, ensuring it was ahead of the curve in response to COVID-19 with home learning complemented by developing a Framework for Recovery, Resilience and Re-connection built on our Nurturing City approach.

In Glasgow we see our 'city as a classroom' and education being a lifelong collaborative journey where the learner has both formal and informal opportunities to expand their knowledge and develop skills in the ever changing economic, political and ecological environments surrounding them. As a city, Glasgow is actively investing in lifelong learning especially as we face the twin green and digital transitions.

We are internationalist city and seek to work in partnership, share knowledge and engage in academic and cultural exchanges with peer cities to expand the life chances and opportunities of all our citizens. Glasgow has been a pioneer of the 'learning city' since 1999 and the concept remains a driving force for the city's development today.

Celebration

Glasgow is looking forward to celebrating its 850th anniversary next year. A milestone year of the modern era will of course be celebrating 1990 when we were crowned – the first UK - European Capital of Culture. We invite everyone on this room to join us in curating citywide celebrations that have our people at its heart wherever they hail from

Cheerleading

And we also invite you to cheerlead for Glasgow – and Europe – in the run up to 2025 and beyond. Confirming Glasgow's commitment to Europe; communicating our engagement and record on success, and joining us in protecting and promoting the rights of EU Citizens and our young people's mobility and European connections. This Saturday in Merchant Square, at the Candleriggs Market in partnership with the Alliance Française in cooperation with Goethe-Institut, the EU Citizens Forum and other European groups. Please promote this and join me and the Lord Provost and City Convener for Communities & Equalities, Councillor Anne McTaggart in celebrating our deep connections and ongoing commitment to Europe. Whilst I can't confirm the rumour that Jakki and Anne will perform as an ABBA tribute act, I can confirm that they are Super Troupers - cheerleading for Glasgow and Europe. So join me now, let's cheer for Europe and Glasgow remaining at its heart!