



Enterprise and Skills Review: progress update

Purpose

- 1 This paper provides an update to board members on the Scottish Government's Enterprise and Skills Review.

Background

- 2 At the January Council board meeting a report was provided referring to:
 - The governance aspects of the Review
 - The Parliamentary debate held on 12 January 2017
 - The objectives of the individual workstreams
 - The meetings that had taken place with Skills Development Scotland with regard to the alignment workstream.

Update

Overall timetable

- 3 The report on Phase 1 was published at the end of October. Since then the Scottish Government has been initiating and taking forward the work of the individual workstreams as part of Phase 2.
- 4 The individual workstreams are:
 - Governance
 - Data and evaluation
 - Regional partnerships
 - South of Scotland enterprise and skills vehicle
 - International
 - Enterprise and Business Support

- Innovation support
- Skills alignment
- Learner Journey.

5 The Scottish Funding Council is represented on all of these workstreams and we have provided two members of staff to the Scottish Government to work on Data & Evaluation and the Learner Journey. All of the workstreams are now undertaking detailed analysis and consideration within their remits. The following two sections provide further information on the Governance and Skills Alignment workstreams.

Governance

6 On 23 February, ‘Proposals on governance and the creation of a strategic board’ was published, a report prepared by Professor Lorne Crerar at the request of the Scottish Government¹.

The following paragraph is withheld from publication on the Council website under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Section 30: Prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs

7 [] x 1 paragraph

8 On 1 March there was a debate in the Scottish Parliament entitled ‘Scottish Funding Council Board (Abolition)’, the conclusion of which was as follows:

- *“That the Parliament recognises the key role and legal status of the current Scottish Funding Council board with regard to the financial and strategic management of Scotland’s colleges and universities; is deeply concerned by the Scottish Government’s proposals to abolish the board, given the limited evidence and consultation on this proposal; notes the proposals in The Crerar Review, which recommend that the Scottish Government should retain the current board; demands that the Scottish Funding Council retains its important functions beyond enterprise and skills, and therefore believes that the Scottish Funding Council must not just be a “delivery board” but also have the powers to act on its own initiative and to challenge government as well as to challenge further and higher education institutions”.*

Skills alignment

9 Following the two workshop meetings involving officials and board members of the Scottish Funding Council and Skills Development Scotland, the first full

¹ <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/enterprise-and-skills-review-crerar/>

meeting of the Scottish Government workstream was held on Wednesday 1 March. Participants included SFC, SDS, Scottish Government and some members of the Ministerial Review Group. It was agreed that there would be development of a 'roadmap' for enhancing collaboration in areas of overlapping interest, which will be discussed at a second meeting of the workstream around the end of March.

Next steps

- 10 It is likely that a report on progress with Phase 2 will be produced within the next few months.

Recommendations

- 11 The Council is invited to note this update on the Enterprise and Skills Review.

Financial implications

- 12 There are no direct financial implications associated with this paper.

Publication

- 13 This paper will be published in edited format on the Council website following the Council meeting.

Further information

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