

CROSS PARTY GROUP ON SKILLS

Tuesday 20 June 2017, 1300-1400 hours
Committee Room 4, Scottish Parliament

Minutes

Present

- James Dornan MSP
- Johann Lamont MSP
- Joanne Buchan, Colleges Scotland
- Maxine McClintock, Skills Development Scotland
- Brian Humphrey, Skills Development Scotland
- Paul Mullan, Skills Development Scotland
- Mairi Rule, Skills Development Scotland
- Fiona Stewart, Skills Development Scotland
- Anne Galbraith, SECTT
- Stephen Young, Young Artwork
- Elaine Ellis, Select
- Sophia Wesolinski, Chartered Banker Institute
- Anne Meikle, Women's Enterprise Scotland
- Robert Bruce, Semta
- Baljinder Birdi, Pearson UK
- Martin Fairbairn, Scottish Funding Council
- John McKinney, Scottish Contractors Group
- Neil Pedersen, Ingeus – Scotland
- Jay Smith, Employment Enterprise
- Anne McInnes, Bemis Scotland
- Iain McCaskey, BESA
- Gerry McGinn, GMG Contractors Ltd
- Daniel McGinn, GMG Contractors Ltd
- Robert Girvan, CITB Scotland
- Alex James, Scouts Scotland

Apologies

- Gillian Martin MSP
- Colin Smyth MSP
- Simon William, NHS Education for Scotland
- Jim Metcalfe, College Development Network
- Helen Bready, City & Guilds
- Drew McGowan, West College Scotland
- Ishabel Bremner, EDAS
- Cara Hilton, CECA Scotland
- George Brown, SQA
- Aileen Ponton, SCQF Partnership
- Barry McCulloch, Federation of Small Businesses
- Ian McCulloch, ITC Academy
- Margaret Munckton, Perth College UHI
- Christine Powell, Essentials Plus Ltd
- Sharon Drysdale, Scottish Funding Council
- Shona Struthers, Colleges Scotland
- Andrew Witty, Colleges Scotland
- Stuart McKenna, Scottish Training Federation
- Kate Still, Rathbone
- Jamie Stewart, Scottish Countryside Alliance
- Paul Little, City of Glasgow College
- John Brown, LifeSkills

1. Welcome and Apologies

James Dornan MSP opened the meeting and thanked Skills Development Scotland (SDS) for sponsoring the lunch. Mr Dornan also noted the apologies from members.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the 21 March 2017 meeting were ratified.

3. Presentation and Discussion

Maxine McClintock, SDS, provided an overview of the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board, whose role is to ensure apprenticeships are aligned to the needs of industry. The board is made up of 4 groups - Group Board, Employer Engagement Group, Employer Equalities Group and the Frameworks and Standards Group. Maxine stated that a number of Group Board meetings have taken place and there have been discussions on the Apprenticeship Levy, Enterprise and Skills Review, Flexible Workforce Development Fund and Work-based Learning. She noted that all groups are chaired by industry and that a number of sub-groups are already up and running.

Brian Humphrey, SDS, presented on the development of Work-based Learning pathways and apprenticeships. He noted that the Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) are benchmarked against the SCQF Framework at Level 6, the same level as Highers which provides parity of esteem with academic learning, and allow for multiple exit routes, including enhancing applications to colleges and universities. Brian stated that FAs were expanding rapidly, that all local authorities and regional colleges were involved, and there would be 12 Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks available next year.

Mairi Rule, SDS, presented on Graduate Level Apprenticeships (GLAs). She noted that they are contextualised and assessed in the workplace with substantial project work and that the qualification is awarded by the university involved. There are 4 frameworks in progress with a further 7 frameworks in the pipeline. It was noted that the universities recognised the need to bring in industry expertise including from colleges who are used to delivering MAs.

A question and answer session followed. There was a question on the rationale for setting the FAs at SCQF Level 6; SDS stated that they do recognise that some young people may struggle to get to that stage, for example with maths part of an engineering FA, and that they are looking into that. SDS also noted that 19% of young people were now on a FA which is positive.

There was a question on the ability of the curriculum to keep up with changes in industry. SDS stated that in terms of technology, the qualifications and MAs need to be adaptable to change and that SDS works with the Sector Skills Councils to keep up-to-date.

There was also question on having more local skills academies. SDS stated that they are trying to create a localised model as far as possible, including matching local employers with their local colleges.

4. Dates of Future Meetings

It was noted the dates of future meetings would be set in due course following parliamentary recess.

5. Close

With no further business to conduct, Mr Dornan thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.