

29 June 2011

SCOTLAND'S FUTURES FORUM

Executive Summary

1. This paper requests the SPCB to ratify the Futures Forum work-plans which were discussed and agreed at a meeting of the Board of Scotland's Futures Forum on 14 June 2011. It further requests the SPCB to consider the appointment of new members to the Board of Scotland's Futures Forum.

Background

2. The SPCB created Scotland's Futures Forum in 2005. It is constituted as a Company Limited by Guarantee. The SPCB is the sole "Member" of the company but does appoint a Board of Directors, including up to 3 MSPs.

3. The Forum aims to help Members, along with policy makers, businesses, academics, and the wider community of Scotland, look beyond immediate horizons to some of the challenges and opportunities we will face in the future.

4. Looking beyond the 4-year electoral cycle and away from party politics, the forum seeks to stimulate public debate in Scotland, bringing fresh perspectives, ideas and creativity on how we might prepare now for the future.

Governance Arrangements for the Forum

New business model

5. In February 2011 the SPCB reaffirmed that the Futures Forum should continue as a limited liability company to stimulate public policy debate on non political long term issues of importance to the people of Scotland and to challenge the body politic against short-termism. It was further agreed that the Forum should adopt a new business model to help develop new collaborations and commissions from external bodies and think-tanks. A budget of £92k for the financial year 2011/12 was set to achieve this.

6. Over recent months, the new format has been put in place. Agreement has been reached with a number of organizations to leverage additional project funding and drive forward new collaborations and commissions.

7. Already, project funding of **£81k** has been secured from collaborations and partnerships with external bodies such as The Goodison Group in Scotland, The Scottish Universities Insight Institute and The David Hume Institute. This is higher than in previous years and reflects the success of the new business model to date. A 2012 seminar series for civil servants and policy makers is being discussed with the Strategy and Economic Policy

Division of the Scottish Government. Talks are also ongoing with a number of other parties e.g. SportScotland and NHS Education for Scotland to explore potential collaborations and leverage additional value.

Board of Directors

8. Given the public nature of the Forum, it has always maintained a high profile Board of Directors; a Board which has the standing to challenge the body politic on its research and reports. It is now opportune to refresh the Board in line with best practice and given the recent Scottish Parliament elections.

9. Currently, the board consists of:

The Presiding Officer

Linda Fabiani MSP

Ross Finnie (former MSP)

John Park MSP

Susan Rice, Managing Director, Lloyds Banking Group, Scotland

Campbell Christie, Chair of the Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services

Stuart Cosgrove, Journalist, Broadcaster and Television Executive

Mary Grant, Former Managing Director, First Scotrail Limited

10. The new Presiding Officer has agreed to take on the role of chairing the Forum Board going forward. Following the Scottish Parliament elections, Ross Finnie has indicated that he wishes to resign his Forum directorship. Linda Fabiani has been newly appointed to the SPCB and has also indicated her intention to stand down, as have Stuart Cosgrove and Mary Grant.

11. The Forum's memorandum and articles allow for up to 10 Directors at any one time. It is suggested that the SPCB consider inviting two MSPs to replace Ross Finnie and Linda Fabiani.

12. In addition, it is suggested that a University Principal be invited to become a Director. Professor Ian Diamond, Principal and Vice Chancellor of Aberdeen University is put forward for consideration. Professor Diamond was previously Chief Executive of the Economic and Social Research Council. He was also Chair of the Research Councils UK Executive Group (2004-2009) the umbrella body that represents all seven UK Research Councils. Professor Diamond will have the additional benefit of helping develop links with the Universities Insight Institute.

13. In line with the closer partnership being developed with The Goodison Group in Scotland and to support the proposed project "Learners in Tomorrow's Scotland; our vital resource", it is proposed that Sir Andrew Cubie be appointed a Forum Director. Andrew Cubie is Chair of Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, Chair of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education in Scotland and holds a number of positions. He holds a number of

non executive directorships in public and private companies and has been engaged in education issues throughout his professional career.

14. It is also proposed that the SPCB consider inviting Anne Douglas to the Board of the Forum. Anne is Prospect National Secretary for Scotland and was President of the STUC in 2004/2005. She is Chair of the Scottish Union Learning Board and also a non executive director for Skills Development Scotland.

15. If adopted, this would mean a new board going forward of:

Tricia Marwick MSP and Presiding Officer of The Scottish Parliament
John Park MSP
Susan Rice, Managing Director, Lloyds Banking Group, Scotland
Campbell Christie, Chair of the Commission on the Future Delivery of
Public Services
And
Two MSP Directors nominated by the SPCB
Sir Andrew Cubie
Anne Douglas
Professor Ian Diamond

Proposals for the Forum's Work Programme 2011/12

16. During Spring 2011, the Forum has delivered monthly Parliamentary events relating to the following topics through the Research Futures Seminar Series:

- The Future of Food – Production and Security, Innogen Centre
- Climate Change seminar and workshop, Edinburgh Beltane, RSE
- Co Production conversation café, NESTA
- The Humankind index, Oxfam
- Realising the Full Potential of Scottish Universities, Edinburgh Beltane

Parallel scoping, preparatory and collaborative work has also been undertaken to deliver the following Forum programme going forward.

17. The programme falls around 4 key areas:

- (i) undertake a specific futures project around skills and learning in the 21st Century in conjunction with The Goodison Group in Scotland.
- (ii) build intelligent collaborations with outside think-tanks in support of MSPs and Committees.
- (iii) Develop a research and event based collaboration with the Scottish Universities Insight Institute

(iv) undertake / commission ad hoc futures work for Committees as required and as the capacity of the Futures Forum allows.

18. While the business model of the Forum has changed, the 2011/12 programme remains substantial and ambitious. The programme has been designed to increase the Parliament's, and MSPs', capacity for futures thinking and knowledge exchange. In relation to the longer term future, its aim is to produce more creative thinking and test/bring new ideas into the work of Parliamentary Committees.

19. The main work streams are discussed in turn below.

(i) Undertake one specific futures project

20. The purpose of this one-year-plus scenario project is to explore the issue of **learning and skills required in the 21st century**. Funding for this project is already in place with The Goodison Group in Scotland. Similar to previous years, this project will see the Forum being used as a genuine safe space to bring a range of interests together in a spirit of open inquiry. However, under the new model of working, it will be conducted in co-production with The Goodison Group rather than exclusively by the Forum. It is expected that the project conclusions will be powerful in challenging the assumptions of business, government and the learning and teaching community. There will be monthly themed workshops commencing September 2011 in addition to developing a set of scenario narratives and a project report. The outrageous proposition/overall vision is - *"By 2025, Scotland will be number 1 in international rankings for learning and skills"*. A full project plan is being developed with a formal launch on 8 September at the Head Office of Lloyds Banking Group in Edinburgh.

21. This national futures project includes developing a strategic partnership with The Goodison Group in Scotland, under the Chairmanship of Sir Andrew Cubie, with whom the Forum has a longstanding working relationship.

ii) Intelligent collaborations with external bodies and think-tanks in support of MSPs and Committees

22. Historically, the Forum has run a seminar series each year. In 2009, this was done in conjunction with the Scottish Government, exploring intractable policy problems identified by senior civil servants. That series proved very successful and led to a second series in 2010/11, this time in conjunction with Scottish Universities Insight Institute and Edinburgh Beltane. The series is used to exchange knowledge on emerging science and research from Scottish Universities, with the political and policy center. Topics to date have included the use of brain imaging, synthetic biology – Scotland's next industrial revolution?, food security, BSL language, and climate change. The series will conclude in June 2011 with a briefing from Professor Sir Tim O' Shea of Edinburgh University.

23. This format has proved to be very successful in engaging MSPs with external thinking, knowledge and ideas. It is proposed that the Forum continues with a third series, this time in conjunction with Scottish think-tanks. Leading think-tanks have been asked to identify a subject/ question/ hypothesis they think is important to Scotland's long term future and a subject they would want to discuss with MSPs. Positive responses to date have been received from:-

- Joseph Rowntree Foundation - Identified topics "A futures look at care and support for older people" and "Young people and housing futures"
- Reform Scotland – Identified topic.... "Local Government reform"
- David Hume Institute – Identified topic...."The New Normal"
- National Endowment of Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) – Identified topic...."Public sector innovation"
- International Futures Forum – Identified topic...."How to operate effectively in a world we only partly understand and cannot control"
- Scottish Centre for Public Policy – topic under discussion
- New Economics Foundation – topic under discussion

The series will commence in September 2011.

24. Additionally, agreement has been reached with The David Hume Institute for events, workshops and MSP roundtables, commencing September 2011 to support intelligent collaboration on the following topics:

- Outlook for the Economy - Robert Chote, Head of the Budget Responsibility Office
- Early Stage Intervention
- Delivery Infrastructure

Agreement with the David Hume Institute has also been reached to share information, event management infrastructure and possible future organizational synergies.

(iii) Develop a research and event-based collaboration with the Scottish Universities Insight Institute.

25. The aim of the Scottish Universities Insight Institute is to provide fresh insights into substantial issues facing Scotland. The Institute's programmes draw on multi-disciplinary research based knowledge and the knowledge and experience of those in the public, private and third sectors. A particular objective is to deploy and get added value from research in which society has invested while strengthening partnerships between academics, policymakers and practitioners.

26. The Forum and the Institute recognise their similar objectives but also the different resources on which the two organisations can most easily draw.

The Forum and the Institute therefore agree to co-operate and collaborate and, in particular:

- To liaise on their planned activities in order to identify synergies and to avoid any unproductive overlap.
- That the Forum will support dissemination of thinking from Institute programmes to Members of the Scottish Parliament and to wider groups with whom the Forum works.
- That the Institute will seek to facilitate universities' involvement in programmes of work led by the Forum.
- That the Institute will host seminars bringing the work of the Forum to a wider audience.

While not part of this agreement, the SFF expects to include a University Principal on its Board of Directors. The Governing Body of the Insight Institute will invite the Chief Executive of the Scottish Parliament to attend its meetings.

Knowledge exchange

27. This agreement will help develop the Forum's aim of knowledge exchange. Having this relationship with a range of Scottish Universities will be very useful in helping provide MSPs with current and emerging research and science coming from Scottish Universities.

28. It is also expected that this relationship may result in ideas and research for the Forum to take forward in future years.

(iv) Undertake ad hoc futures work in support of MSPs and Scottish Parliament Committees

29. The Forum is liaising with Stephen Imrie, Clerk Team Leader and Ken Hughes, Head of Committees and Outreach to ensure improved links and profile. Face to face meetings and briefings are planned with conveners and clerks. This will also involve party spokespeople, MSPs on the relevant cross party groups and SPICe researchers. It is also the intention to have a Forum briefing to the new Conveners Group.

Resource Implications

30. The Parliament budget of £92k has been augmented through additional project funding and infrastructure support from partners under the new business model. In summary, the Forum has the necessary funding and resources in place to undertake the above work programme during 2011/12.

Next Steps

31. The Forum will take forward the work plans and the administration of the Board "refresh" in line with SPCB requirements.

Publication Scheme

32. This paper will be published after the appointment of the Forum Board Directors has been made public.

Decision

33. The SPCB is invited to:

33.1 agree to invite additional SFF Board members consisting of:

- Sir Andrew Cubie
- Anne Douglas
- A University Principal – Professor Ian Diamond
- 2 MSPs at the discretion of the SPCB

33.2 ratify the Forum's 2011/12 work programme as detailed in this paper

**Scotland's Futures Forum
June 2011**