

**SCOTTISH EMPLOYABILITY FORM
NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2013
COSLA Conference Centre, Verity House, 19 Haymarket Yards, Edinburgh**

Present:

John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment & Sustainable Growth
Rt. Hon Michael Moore MP, Secretary of State for Scotland
Cllr Harry McGuigan, COSLA Spokesperson for Health and Wellbeing
Angela Constance, Minister for Youth Employment
Michelle McCrindle, SCVO
Laurie Russell, Chair of Social Enterprise Scotland
Professor Alan McGregor, Chair of the National Delivery Group
Crawford Gillies, Chair of Scottish Enterprise
Mike Kirby, President of STUC
Richard Cornish, Director of Work Services Scotland, DWP
Paul McKelvie OBE, Scotland Commissioner to the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES)
Paul De Pellette, Director for Scotland, Ingeus
Helena Craw, Director for Scotland, Working Links
Elma Murray, Chief Executive, North Ayrshire Council, SOLACE Representative
Colin Borland, Head of External Affairs, Federation of Small Businesses
Tony McElroy, Tesco, Head of Regional Government Affairs - Employer Representative
Professor Mary Bownes, Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Supporting Officials:

Paula McLeay, COSLA
Hugh McAloon, Scottish Government
Joanne Farrow, Scottish Government
Tereasa Bell, Scotland Office
James Newman, Scotland Office
Pamela Smith, SLAED Representative

Apologies:

John McLelland, CBE, Chair of Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Funding Council
Professor Lorne Crerar, Chair of Highlands and Islands Enterprise

AGENDA ITEM 1: Welcome & Introductions

1. John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment & Sustainable Growth welcomed everyone to the meeting, confirmed apologies and informed attendees that John McClelland had advised that Paul McKelvie would represent SDS and SFC interests at today's meeting.
2. Mr Swinney thanked members for attending the first meeting of the newly constituted Scottish Employability Forum (SEF), particularly Mr Moore and Cllr McGuigan, who have agreed to jointly Chair the Forum.
3. Mr Swinney advised attendees that political input into the Scottish Employability Forum was one of the key commitments made in the 'Working for Growth' Employability Strategy re-refresh, launched in September 2012 in partnership with CoSLA. Mr Swinney then invited Rt. Hon Michael Moore MP and Cllr Harry McGuigan to offer some opening remarks.

4. Mr Moore and Cllr McGuigan both advised that they were delighted to jointly Chair the Forum and look forward to working with partners and key stakeholders from across Government and Scotland.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Employability Landscape in Scotland

5. Mr Swinney invited Professor Alan McGregor to present an overview of the current employability & skills landscape in Scotland.
6. Prof. McGregor outlined the work of the [National Delivery Group](#) to members, and then gave a short [presentation](#) focussed on the following key areas:
 - The changing labour market environment and the scale of the issue;
 - Cross Government support to assist individuals to move towards and into work;
 - Successful partnership working and innovation to date; and
 - Areas which remain a challenge, and could provide a potential focus for the SEF moving forward.
7. Mr Swinney invited members to have an open discussion on their thoughts on the challenges presented, and asked members to consider which areas SEF members could work together on to improve performance.
8. Discussion followed and members agreed that:
 - There is a need for a more evidence-based approach to the introduction of new interventions to tackle employability.
 - There is a need for better alignment of services - the landscape is complex and further work is required to ensure interventions do not compete or duplicate effort, and to make it easier for individuals and employers to navigate the system.
 - Better information sharing is required between key providers of employability and skills services to remove unnecessary duplication of effort and drive efficiency in the sector as a whole.
 - There is a need for a more collective approach to analysing performance which makes it easier to make judgements about progress and focus all efforts on complementary outcome focused activities.
 - A greater focus is needed on mapping the right partner organisation to the right individual to ensure interventions are focused on individual need.
 - A greater focus on joining employability services and economic demand is required to ensure individuals have the appropriate skills to take advantage of emerging job opportunities and businesses are provided with the most appropriate support.
9. Mr Swinney invited Professor McGregor to convene a meeting of the National Delivery Group (NDG) to build on this morning's discussions, and further inform thinking of SEF members. Mr Moore and Cllr McGuigan concurred, and requested that a paper be brought forward to SEF members outlining an evidence based assessment of the most pressing priorities, so as to inform the development of a corporate position to be agreed by all the members of SEF.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Commonwealth Games 2014

10. Mr Swinney invited Richard Cornish, Director of Work Services Scotland, DWP to provide an update on partnership working and the employment opportunities that will be available as a result of the Commonwealth Games in 2014.
11. Richard's [presentation](#) outlined the key partners involved, their respective roles and responsibilities and highlighted some of the key achievements to date including the

number of volunteering opportunities advertised, the number Games related contracts let and the £5m Legacy 2014 Young Persons Fund established.

12. Richard then asked members to consider what further potential opportunities this opportunity could create, areas for enhanced partnership working, and what would success look like and how could it be measured?
13. In discussion, there was broad agreement:
 - a. For the DWP bid to work with the Games Organising Committee and others to aim for greater ambition to realise opportunities for unemployed people when contracting vacancies; and
 - b. To the suggestion that, where possible, the skills volunteers gain from their service to the Games should be quantified to help individuals with future job applications.
14. Following discussion, Richard was able to give members assurance that partners were building on the learning from the London Olympics, and additionally that all individuals benefitting related opportunities would continue to be supported beyond the end of the Games related contract.
15. Mr Swinney summarised the discussion, endorsing the collective view that any opportunity to support unemployed individuals either through work or volunteering, should be maximised and asked all partners to agree to take forward partnership working in the context of the presentation and feedback in due course.

AGENDA ITEM 4: Common Objectives and Measuring Progress

16. Mr Swinney then invited Mr Moore to lead members in discussion around the opportunities for joint development and consensus.
17. Mr Moore referred members to the [SEF remit](#), which was previously circulated and invited members to agree to the terms. Mr Moore suggested that the remit set out a clear aspiration for all to work towards, and a provided a mandate for officials and delivery partners to work collaboratively to achieve common goals, reporting back to SEF on progress at the next meeting in September 2013.
18. Members agreed and all three Chairs requested that, through Professor McGregor, NDG members provide their paper on recommendation for key areas of action for SEF by end February 2013, to be signed off by each Chair thus providing a workplan for the Forum. Mr Moore summarised that the paper should include:
 - Analysis of how the 3 tiers of government and key stakeholders tackle the main priorities, and
 - Areas for improvement and how we will judge success (with a view to achieving a shared corporate view on these issues).
19. With no other business or comments being brought forward, Mr Swinney then closed the meeting and thanked all for their attendance and participation.

End of discussion