

South of Scotland Enterprise Agency

Consultation Analysis

Richard Scothorne
Director
Rocket Science UK Ltd



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Executive summary

Introduction

Between March and June 2018, the Scottish Government ran a consultation process about the planned Enterprise Agency for the South of Scotland (“the Agency”). The online consultation consisted of one closed and 20 open-text questions and was supplemented by 26 engagement events at different locations throughout the South of Scotland. The engagement events were organised and publicised by the Southern Uplands Partnership.

There were a total of 268 responses to the online consultation. 153 responses were from individuals and 115 responses from organisations.

This report presents the analysis of the 268 responses to the online consultation and summary notes of the 26 engagement events which the Southern Uplands Partnership provided.

The central messages of the respondents are summarised below. The key messages were raised by respondents and event discussions across both Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders, indicating that there is shared need across both local authority areas and a clear rationale for the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency.

Ambitions for the South of Scotland

87% of respondents agreed with the Scottish Government’s outlined ambition for the South of Scotland. In the open-text comments respondents highlighted the importance of inclusive growth and increased productivity, good employment opportunity and wages, the importance of sustainable approaches and the need to diversify the economy. In addition, the need for economic regeneration and infrastructure development. The East-West road and rail network in particular was emphasised.

The economic context of the South of Scotland

Respondents outlined a wide range of economic challenges that they would like to see the Agency address, including: low productivity in the South of Scotland; Brexit and the loss of European funding; the demographic challenge of an ageing population and young people leaving the area; as well as the lack of affordable housing, further and higher education opportunities and a skilled workforce.

Respondents highlighted a range of economic strengths in the South of Scotland that they would like the Agency to build upon, including: the quality of life in the South of Scotland; its history, cultural heritage and natural capital; and a range of sectors that are important to the South of Scotland, including primary industries, the creative sector and the tourism industry.

Potential activities for the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency

What currently works well in the South of Scotland

Respondents highlighted that the South of Scotland has a vibrant community sector that provides important services and activities for local communities. In addition, the current level of partnership working, and the support provided by different agencies, were highlighted as areas that currently work well.

Activities related to the aim of driving forward the economy

Respondents emphasised the need to better market the South of Scotland to attract new sectors, investment and tourists to the area. The importance of the Agency supporting and working together with local businesses was highlighted.

Activities related to the aim of growing and sustaining communities

Respondents suggested that the Agency should help communities to grow their capacity and provide funding and support to community groups and social enterprises.

Activities related to the aim of capitalising on people and resources

Respondents suggested that the Agency should develop more value-added operations through local processing and investment in research and innovation. The need to further develop the education and skills sector was highlighted as well as the need to capitalise on the skills and experience of older and local people.

Effective boundaries

Respondents emphasised the need for the Agency to cooperate with other agencies and institutions and local authorities (both Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders, and other neighbouring Scottish local authorities) as well as England and Northern Ireland.

Location and Board of the Agency

Respondents suggested that accessibility was the key criteria for choosing a location for the Agency but the importance of digital and face-to-face delivery was also highlighted.

It was suggested that the Board of the Agency should be made up of a diverse group of individuals. Respondents in particular highlighted the importance of involving local representatives, individuals from the private sector and young people.

Young people

A large majority of respondents highlighted the importance of keeping young people in the area and suggested various ways of doing so, ranging from creating education and training as well as employability and job opportunities.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Between March and June 2018, the Scottish Government ran a consultation process about the planned Enterprise Agency for the South of Scotland (hereafter “the Agency”). The consultation consisted of:

- An online consultation comprising of one closed-question and 20 open-text questions. A total of **268 responses to the online consultation were submitted**.
- The online consultation was supplemented with **26 engagement events** at different locations throughout the South of Scotland (Dumfries and Galloway and Scottish Borders). The engagement events were led by members of the South of Scotland Economic Partnership (SOSEP) and staff from the Scottish Government. The Southern Uplands Partnership was commissioned by SOSEP to organise and publicise the events. The events explored general questions and comments about the planned Agency for the South and asked participants to formulate their key questions and comments. The summary notes from each event are considered as a response to the consultation.

Rocket Science UK Ltd. was commissioned by the Scottish Government to analyse the responses to the consultation process, including both the 268 submitted responses to the online consultation and the summary notes from the 26 consultation events.

Background to the planned South of Scotland Enterprise Agency

Following Phase 2 of the Enterprise and Skills Review, the Scottish Government confirmed that it proposed to establish a new Enterprise Agency for the South of Scotland as a public body through primary legislation. The Agency has three overarching aims:

- Maximise the South of Scotland’s contribution to Scotland’s inclusive growth with a focus on supporting a diverse and resilient economy.
- Sustain and grow communities, i.e. building and strengthening communities through joining up economic and community support.
- Capitalise on people and resources through developing skills, promoting assets and maximising the impact of investment in the area.

The Scottish Government intends to introduce the legislation to establish a new public body to the Scottish Parliament in 2018, with the goal of the Agency beginning formal legislative operation from 1 April 2020.

For the interim period, the Scottish Government has established an interim partnership: the South of Scotland Economic Partnership (SOSEP). Professor Russel Griggs OBE is the Chair of the Partnership and Rob Dickson its Chief Officer. The Partnership is made up of partners from the private, public, third, further and higher education sectors. In the 2018/19 financial year, the Scottish Government has identified £10 million to support the Government's ambition to drive forward inclusive growth and support communities across the South of Scotland.

The consultation was a key step in informing the legislation to establish the Agency as well as providing both SOSEP and the future agency with valuable insights about the views of communities, businesses and organisations operating in the South of Scotland.

The methodology adopted is described in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 sets out the consultation questions, while Appendix 3 sets out the list of respondents who agreed to have their responses published.

Report structure

The rest of the report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 - Profile of respondents: Outlines those who responded to the consultation including the proportion of individual and organisation responses, types of responding organisations and the location of consultation events.

Chapter 3 - Ambitions for the South of Scotland: Discusses respondents' ambitions for the South of Scotland including its economy, infrastructure and communities.

Chapter 4 - The economic context of the South of Scotland: Examines perceived economic challenges and strengths in the region and regional differences, both within the South and between the South and other areas of Scotland.

Chapter 5 - Potential activities for the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency: Including activities relating to driving forward the economy, growing and sustaining communities, and capitalising on people and resources.

Chapter 6 - Effective boundaries: Outlines respondents' views on the types of cooperation which were seen as necessary for the successful operation of the Agency.

Chapter 7 - Location and Board of the Agency: Including how the location of the Agency should be decided and the types of individuals who should make up the Board.

Chapter 8 - Young people: Reviews respondents' views on how young people can be encouraged to stay and move to the South of Scotland.

Chapter 9 - Other issues: Discusses issues relating to equalities, cooperation with stakeholders and views on the structure and decision-making processes of the Agency.

Chapter 2 Profile of respondents

This chapter outlines who responded to the consultation.

Figure 1 shows that out of the 268 respondents to the online consultations, 153 were individuals (57%) and 115 were organisations (43%).

Figure 1 Individual and organisational responses to the online consultation

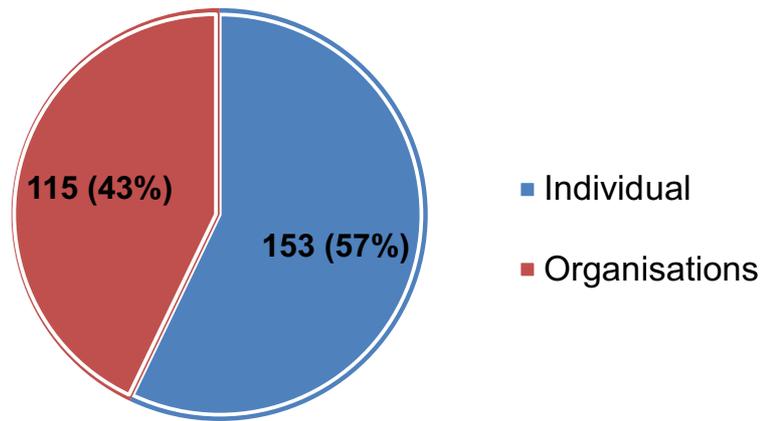


Figure 2 shows the different types of organisations that responded. Community organisations and national organisations responded most often (30% respectively), followed by businesses (16%), other organisational responses (10%) and local authorities (6%).

Figure 2 The types of organisations that responded to the online consultation

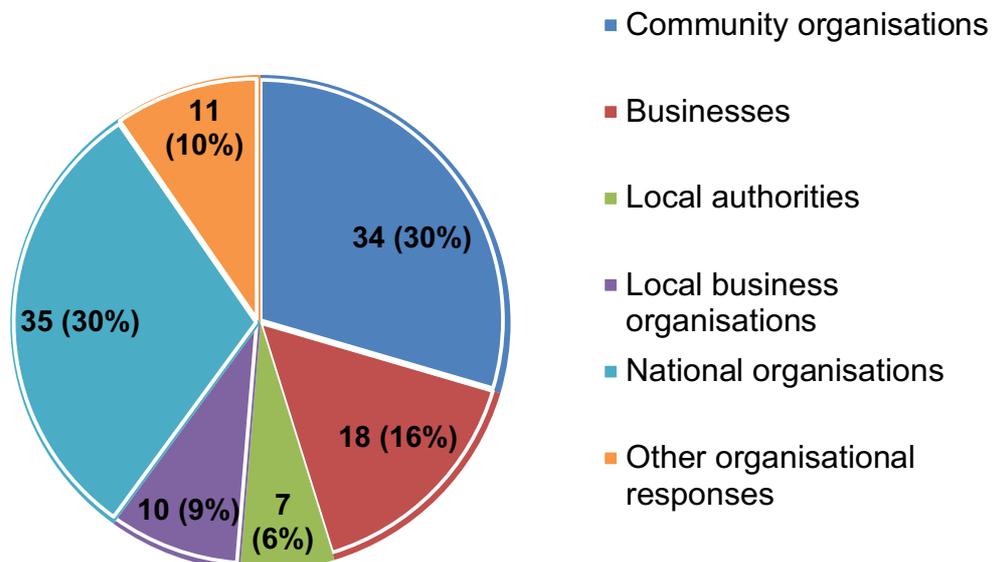
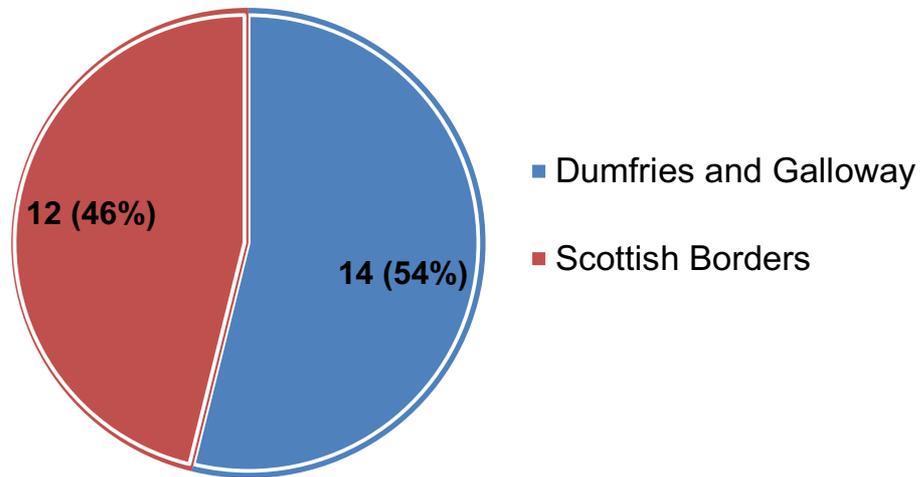


Figure 3 shows how many of the consultation events took place in Dumfries and Galloway or the Scottish Borders. There was a nearly even split with 14 events having taken place in Dumfries and Galloway and 12 events having taken place in the Scottish Borders.

Figure 3 The location of consultation events



Chapter 3 Ambitions for the South of Scotland

The consultation document outlined the Scottish Government’s ambition for the South of Scotland:

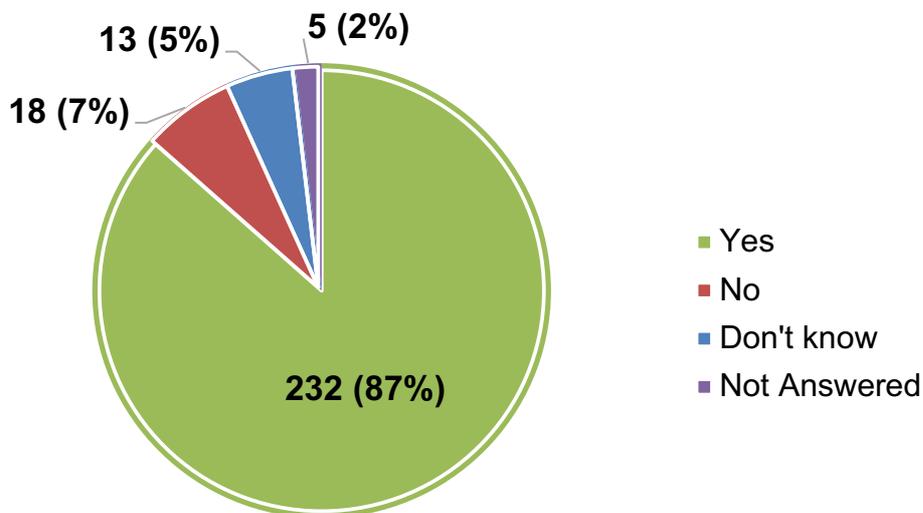
- Businesses with increased productivity that are ambitious for the future, investing in innovations, and offering good employment opportunities with higher wages.
- A skilled workforce, with the skills needed now and the ability to develop the skills needed in the future.
- More opportunities for young people so that they stay in the South of Scotland.
- Communities better equipped to play a greater role in the economic, social and environmental success of the South of Scotland.
- Identifying and tackling the barriers to inclusive growth.

The consultation asked respondents to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the outlined ambition.

Figure 4 shows that a large majority (87%) of respondents to the online consultation agreed with the Scottish Government’s outlined ambition for the South of Scotland. Only a few respondents (7%) indicated that they did not agree with the Scottish Government’s outlined ambition.

Figure 4 Respondents’ answers as to whether they agree with the outlined ambition for the South of Scotland

A large majority of respondents agreed with the Scottish Government's outlined ambition for the South of Scotland



This was followed by three open-text questions, asking respondents whether they agree with the outlined ambition, what they would like to see for the South of Scotland, and their ambitions for the future economic success of the South of Scotland.

In response to the open-text questions, respondents raised the following issues:

- South of Scotland's economy
- Economic regeneration and infrastructure development
- Better joined-up working
- Vibrant communities
- Education and skills development
- Focus on sustainability
- Focus on young people

Each of these points is analysed in more detail below.

3.1 South of Scotland's economy

Many respondents to the online consultation and 12 out of 26 consultation events outlined their ambition for South of Scotland's economy which they would like to see characterised by:

- **Inclusive growth and increased productivity:** Respondents highlighted their ambition for the South of Scotland to have an economy that is growing, socially inclusive and tackles inequality, supplemented by a job market providing equal opportunities for all. In addition, there was an ambition for increased productivity across the South of Scotland with a rise in the Gross Value Added per worker in the South of Scotland.
- **Good employment opportunities and wages:** Many respondents to the online consultation and participants at 12 consultation events highlighted the need to overcome the current low-wage economy in the South of Scotland and develop high-skilled and well-paid employment opportunities in the South of Scotland. An increase in the wage levels was regarded as a first step in attracting professionals to the South of Scotland and encouraging young people to stay in the area (a point further discussed in Chapter 8).
- **Diversification of the local economy:** Besides raising the importance of the traditional sectors in the South of Scotland, respondents highlighted the need for the South of Scotland's economy to be diversified. The over-reliance on a few sectors, particularly agriculture, but also large employers was seen as making the South of Scotland prone to risks and economic shocks.
- **Business landscape:** Respondents highlighted their ambition for the South of Scotland to have a thriving local business base. In particular, it was felt that the agency's focus should be on supporting businesses that are

indigenous to the South of Scotland. A few felt that this should take precedence over the ambition to attract investment and businesses from outside the area.

- **Circular economy:** Some respondents outlined their vision for a circular economy in the South of Scotland. This included the suggestion that local businesses and public-sector organisations develop local supply chains. The circular economy was presented as a being more sustainable than traditional models of economic growth.

3.2 Economic regeneration and infrastructure development

In addition to outlining their general ambition for the South of Scotland's economy, many respondents made comments regarding the need for economic regeneration and investment in the South of Scotland.

- Respondents highlighted their ambition for the South of Scotland to be an attractive place to live and visit but also work and invest, and for the profile of the South of Scotland to be raised accordingly. In particular, they highlighted the need for the South of Scotland to:
 - **Attract investment and businesses:** This was seen as a means to ensure economic growth and create good employment opportunities (see above) and as attracting new sectors to the South of Scotland (see Section 5.2).
 - **Attract professionals and a skilled workforce:** Attracting professionals and widening the talent pool was seen as crucial for the South of Scotland's economy.
- Respondents suggested that the transport infrastructure in the South of Scotland should be better developed. In particular, respondents proposed that:
 - The public transport timetables, i.e. train and bus schedules and the frequency with which they run, should be developed to fit around commuting patterns.
 - The Borders Railway should be extended further south to Carlisle, with stops in between being considered.
 - The railway line between Dumfries and Stranraer should be reopened.
 - Many respondents suggested that the East-West road network, particularly the A7, A68, A75, A76 and A77, could be further improved, with potholes being filled and dual carriageways being developed for the whole length of these roads.
 - Respondents also suggested that the role and potential of ports and harbours should be considered by the South of Scotland Enterprise

Agency, particularly the port in Stranraer, and Annan and Eyemouth harbours.

- Respondents highlighted the importance of transport infrastructure for other areas of development in the South of Scotland. It was felt that a better developed transport system in the South of Scotland had the potential to reduce social isolation, increase tourism, attract investment and business (see above), and encourage young people to remain in the area (see Chapter 8).
- Respondents highlighted that they would like to see the digital infrastructure improved, i.e. faster broadband speeds and improved mobile coverage.
- Respondents outlined their ambition for thriving town centres, suggesting that town centres and decaying buildings should be regenerated. They outlined their vision for town centres to have a range of shops and cafes but also post offices and banks.

3.3 Better joined up working

Many respondents to the online consultation and participants at 16 of the 26 consultation events suggested that they would like to see a South of Scotland that is characterised by meaningful cooperation between different stakeholders and better joined-up working. This included cooperation across:

- **Different sectors**, including:
 - The private, public and third sectors.
 - Different sectors of the rural economy such as forestry and farming.
 - Sectors that can support the tourism industry such as the food and drinks industry and the creative sector.
 - It was also suggested that developments across the South of Scotland should strike a balance between environmental, economic and social concerns.
- **Different organisations**: There was a perception that there are currently many organisations doing different things. The view was that their activities should be better joined up and that there should be an integrated approach to policy making, for example, a coordinated approach to tackling poverty and inequality in the South of Scotland. Respondents also suggested that local agencies and central government, as well as local authorities and social enterprises, should work together more closely.

3.4 Vibrant communities

A few respondents outlined their ambition for the South of Scotland to be characterised by vibrant communities. This included communities being well-equipped to take an active part in the development of the South of Scotland and for

citizens across the South of Scotland to have equal opportunities and the possibility of leading a healthy lifestyle.

3.5 Education and skills development

Some respondents highlighted that they would like education provision in the South of Scotland – ranging from school to college and higher education – to be extended and improved. In addition, it was felt that there should be a focus on employability and entrepreneurship.

3.6 Focus on sustainability

Many respondents said that they would like to see a South of Scotland that has a focus on sustainable development approaches. They outlined a focus on:

- Environmental sustainability, with a focus on a sustainable use of natural resources including land use (e.g. multi-use forestry), renewable energy or the development of a smart energy system.
- However, a few respondents questioned the merit of wind farms, as it was felt that they compromised the natural landscape of the South of Scotland and therefore have a detrimental effect on tourism.
- Economic sustainability, including a focus on:
 - Sustainable business growth
 - Low-carbon economy, including an infrastructure allowing people to have a low carbon footprint but also the creation of a low carbon economy as set out in the Scottish Government Climate Change Plan.

3.7 Focus on young people

Respondents outlined that they would like the South of Scotland to better invest in its young people. The ambitions here ranged from providing young people with better education and job opportunities to retaining and attracting more young people to the South of Scotland. All of these points are further discussed in Chapter 8.

Chapter 4 The economic context of the South of Scotland

Respondents were asked which strengths of the South of Scotland they would like to see the agency to build on and, in turn, which economic challenges they would like the agency to address. This chapter outlines responses both from online respondents and consultation events.

4.1 Economic challenges to be addressed

A large majority of respondents to the online consultation and 24 out of 26 consultation events outlined one or more of the economic challenges below that they would like the Agency to address:

- Low productivity
- Brexit and the replacement of European Union funding
- Reduction in bureaucracy
- Demographic challenges
- Deprived communities
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of further and higher education opportunities
- Lack of a skilled workforce
- A low wage economy
- Infrastructure challenges
- Restrictive planning processes

Each of these points are discussed in more detail below.

4.1.1 Low productivity

In line with the ambition for inclusive growth and increased productivity (see Section 2.1), respondents highlighted the low levels of productivity, e.g. the Gross Value Added, as a challenge facing the South of Scotland.

4.1.2 Brexit and European Union funding

Some respondents, and 6 out of 26 consultation events, felt that Brexit - both the loss of EU funding (particularly for land-based industries) and/or the potential loss of access to the wider European labour market - could have a negative effect on the South of Scotland. This was seen as a challenge that the Agency could help to address.

4.1.3 Reduction in bureaucracy

Respondents felt that both individuals and organisations are often faced with excessive bureaucracy – a challenge respondents would like to see the Agency address, particularly in terms of seeking funding support.

4.1.4 Demographic challenges

Many respondents drew attention to a variety of interlinked demographic challenges facing the South of Scotland, i.e. a declining and ageing population, which is further exacerbated by many young and economically active people leaving the area, creating a “brain drain” from the South of Scotland. The primary means through which this demographic challenge could be addressed by the Agency is by ensuring that young people are provided with opportunities – a point further explored in Chapter 8. With respect to the ageing population in the South of Scotland, respondents suggested that the support and care provision for the older population should be considered by the Agency, both as a local need and as an economic sector with growth potential.

4.1.5 Deprived communities

Some respondents emphasised the high levels of inequality, deprivation, fuel poverty and social isolation of many communities in the South of Scotland, which they regarded as the results of a low wage economy, high living costs and cuts to public sector services. It was felt that the Agency should have a role in tackling deprivation in the South of Scotland.

4.1.6 Lack of affordable housing

Some respondents felt that there was currently a lack of affordable and social housing and that locals were usually not in a position to afford their own home. Regarding this, it was suggested that the Agency should support a regeneration process which is focused on enhancing the housing options for local people.

4.1.7 Lack of further and higher education opportunities

Respondents felt that there was currently a lack of further and higher education opportunities across the South of Scotland. Respondents suggested that there should be a wider range of training opportunities available, both in terms of a more substantial college presence and more subjects being offered, particularly in terms of tourism, hospitality and agricultural training pathways.

The provision of more training opportunities was seen as the key to keeping young people in the area.

4.1.8 Lack of a skilled workforce

Some respondents emphasised that employers currently find it difficult to recruit a skilled workforce and that the Agency should address skills shortages across different industries.

4.1.9 A low-wage economy

Some respondents felt that there was currently a low-wage economy operating in the South of Scotland and that the local economy was characterised by a shortage of well-paid employment opportunities. Respondents highlighted that many of the South of Scotland's major sectors, such as tourism and agriculture only offer seasonal work. The perceived high levels of unemployment were also highlighted.

4.1.10 Infrastructure challenges

Similar to the infrastructural ambitions outlined in Chapter 2, many respondents to the online consultation, and 17 out of 26 consultation events, noted a number of infrastructural challenges that they would like the Agency to address, including:

- Poor digital infrastructure, e.g. mobile and broadband delivery.
- Insufficient transport infrastructure, in terms of both the road and rail networks. In addition, respondents pointed out the cost of transport as a challenge for the people of the South of Scotland.
- Some respondents raised the issue of town centres decaying with high street shops closing down, derelict and empty properties, and a lack of leisure facilities.

4.1.11 Restrictive planning processes

A few respondents suggested that current planning processes were too slow and restrictive, and that there is a need to better involve communities in local planning processes. For respondents' opinions on the role of the Agency in planning processes, see Section 9.4.

4.2 Economic strengths for the Agency to build upon

A large majority of respondents to the online consultation, and 23 out of 26 consultation events, outlined a number of economic strengths they would like the Agency to build upon:

- Community spirit
- Quality of life
- History and cultural heritage
- Natural capital
- Strategic location
- Micro and small businesses
- Sectors important to the South of Scotland
- Educational provision

Each of these points will be explored in further detail below.

4.2.1 Community spirit

Respondents highlighted that the South of Scotland is characterised by a strong community sector and communities that are characterised by a high degree of cohesion, resilience and commitment to the local area. It was suggested that the agency should involve communities closely in its activities, a point further explored in Section 5.3.

4.2.2 Quality of life

Some respondents to the online consultation highlighted that the South of Scotland's natural environment provides a high quality of life. They identified this as the "unique selling point" of the South of Scotland. The South of Scotland was described as an area which was a good place to raise a family and provides opportunities for healthy living. It was suggested that the Agency could capitalise on this strength both in terms of boosting tourism and attracting skilled professionals and businesses to the area.

4.2.3 History and cultural heritage

The South of Scotland's rich cultural heritage and historical significance, including the area's links with Robert Burns and Walter Scott, were identified as a strength of the area that the Agency should build upon, particularly in terms of further developing the tourism industry.

4.2.4 Natural capital

A majority of respondents to the online consultation, and 15 out of 26 consultation events, identified the South of Scotland's natural capital as a major strength that the Agency should build upon. This included in particular:

- Land-based industries such as agriculture and forestry, but also fishery, food processing and land management.
- Renewable energies, ranging from on and off-shore wind farms to hydropower. The renewable energy sector was seen as providing the potential to increase employment and business opportunities in the South of Scotland but also make the area more self-sufficient. It was felt that there should be a coordinated approach to further developing the renewable energy sector across the South of Scotland.
- Lastly, the area's landscape, scenery, and wildlife was seen as a major strength, particularly in terms of further developing the tourism industry. Respondents drew attention to the wide-range of outdoor tourism that the South of Scotland provides, including mountain biking, canoeing and walking.

4.2.5 Strategic location

Respondents emphasised that the South of Scotland has a good strategic location, being relatively close to Newcastle, The Central Belt of Scotland, and Northern Ireland. It was felt that an improved transport infrastructure was needed to capitalise on this strategic location.

4.2.6 Micro and small businesses

Some respondents regarded the presence of a wide range of micro and small businesses, and the entrepreneurial spirit of communities in the South of Scotland as a major strength. It was felt that the importance of small businesses to the South of Scotland should be taken into account by the Agency, and that support should be provided to help small businesses grow (see Section 5.2).

4.2.7 Sectors important to the South of Scotland

A majority of respondents to the online consultation, and 14 out of 26 consultation events, pointed out a range of sectors which they considered strengths of the South of Scotland which the Agency should build on. These sectors included:

- **Primary industries:** Respondents highlighted the importance of agriculture, forestry and fishing for the South of Scotland. While respondents pointed out the high quality of these sectors in the area, it was felt that there was a need to modernise them. Related to this, land management was identified as a sector of importance to the South of Scotland that the Agency could further develop.
- **Tourism:** Respondents suggested that tourism should play a major role in the economic development of the South of Scotland and that there is significant scope to increase the number of tourists visiting the area. It was felt that more could be done to capitalise on opportunities provided by this sector – a point further explored in Section 5.2.
- **Food and drinks industry:** It was suggested that the local food and drink industry, including food processing, was a major strength of the South of Scotland. The high quality of the local produce was highlighted.
- **Creative sector:** Respondents emphasised the creative sector as a strength of the South of Scotland, ranging from local crafts (e.g. knitwear) to arts. It was felt that this sector has the potential to make the South of Scotland more attractive to young people, professionals and tourists. As such, it was felt that the Agency should pay due attention to the role and importance of the creative sector.

4.2.8 Educational provision

Besides the challenges associated with the education sector outlined above, respondents also highlighted aspects of the educational provision that they considered a strength. These included, amongst others, the Crichton Campus in Dumfries, Borders College, Dumfries and Galloway College and the Scottish Borders Campus. Respondents also pointed out that there is good secondary education in the South of Scotland and that attainment levels are relatively high.

4.3 Regional differences

Besides strengths and challenges, some respondents pointed out a range of differences between the South of Scotland and the rest of Scotland, as well as regional differences within the South of Scotland.

- Some respondents felt that the South of Scotland was distinct from the rest of Scotland in terms of its social economic challenges - and that this distinctiveness should be taken into account by the Agency in line with the Scottish Government's emphasis on "place". It was felt that the South of Scotland was the neglected area of Scotland, a situation that they hoped the Agency would rectify.
- Respondents to the online consultation, and 4 out of 26 of the consultation events (all of these four events took place in Dumfries and Galloway), also highlighted a range of differences within the South of Scotland. It was felt that previous economic development investments were focused on the larger towns at the expense of more rural areas and small villages. A few respondents also noted that there are a range of differences between the Scottish Borders on the one hand, and Dumfries and Galloway on the other. In particular, it was felt that the Scottish Borders has received greater investment in the last few years, particularly through the development of the Borders Railway. As such, the South-West of Scotland was seen as the neglected region in the South of Scotland. It was suggested that regional parity should be one of the guiding principles of the Agency.
- As we point out elsewhere, despite these perceptions of differences in patterns of investment, there were no significant differences identified in the focus of responses from both individual respondents and events in the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway – in other words, the assessment of issues and opportunities was similar across the area.

Chapter 5 Potential activities for the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency

The online consultation outlined a range of activities in relation to the Agency's overall aims to drive the economy forward, to sustain and grow communities, and to capitalise on people and resources. Respondents were then asked what they think currently works well in the South of Scotland. In addition, respondents were asked what they would add or take away from the potential activities in relation to each of the overarching aims. Respondents were also asked what they would prioritise as the key areas of activity of the Agency and what specific things the Agency could do to help the respondents, their business, their sector or community. In the last two questions, respondents generally reiterated the points they had made to their answers on the Agency's activities. As such, the answers to these questions were not coded separately.

This chapter outlines respondents' perception of what currently works well in the South of Scotland, and their suggestions for the Agency's activities in relation to the three overall aims of the Agency.

5.1 What currently works well in the South of Scotland

Many respondents, and 1 out of 26 consultation events, discussed areas which they both felt currently work well and do not work well in the South of Scotland. Respondents pointed out the following areas as currently working well in the South of Scotland:

- **Community sector:** Respondents pointed out that the South of Scotland currently has a vibrant community sector that provides important services and activities in local communities. The important role that volunteers play was also pointed out. It was felt that the community sector ensures that many of South of Scotland's residents are active and engaged.
- **Partnership working:** Respondents suggested that the level of partnership working – between different governmental agencies, local and national organisations, the NHS or educational institutions with local authorities, and between the private, public and third sector – currently works well in the South of Scotland. It was suggested that the small population of the South of Scotland allows for close and meaningful networks to be developed.
- **Support provided by different agencies:** Respondents also identified a range of support services that are currently offered by different agencies as examples of what currently works well in the South of Scotland. The organisations cited by respondents included, amongst others, Business Gateway, the two local authorities, Creative Scotland, Visit Scotland and Scottish Enterprise.

- **Local entrepreneurship:** Respondents also identified the current level of entrepreneurship in the South of Scotland as an example of what is currently working well.

In addition, respondents highlighted areas that they felt were not currently working well. In addition to the range of economic challenges already described (see Section 4.2), respondents highlighted cuts to local services and a lack of support for local businesses as areas that are currently not working well.

5.2 Activities related to the aim of driving forward the economy

A large majority of respondents, and 25 out of 26 consultation events, outlined areas where they felt the Agency could help to drive forward the economy in the South of Scotland. These included:

- **Attracting new sectors to the South of Scotland:** Retail, creative, scientific, data and technology, manufacturing and digital were identified as sectors which could be attracted to the South of Scotland.
- **Branding and marketing the South of Scotland:** Respondents described a need to raise the profile and develop a brand identity for the South of Scotland to attract tourists and encourage people to live in the area. This would involve identifying and promoting the region's unique selling points. It was felt that marketing activity was necessary to promote the area and attract investment.
- **Investment and infrastructure:** It was felt that the Agency would need to increase investment (directly and through encouraging inward investment) and improve infrastructure to drive forward the economy. This includes investment in areas such as housing, rail, technology, digital connectivity and public transport.
- **Tourism:** Respondents described a need to focus on developing tourism in the area, including encouraging visitors to stop and spend time in the South of Scotland rather than passing through it, and increasing the length of stays in the area.

In addition it was felt that the Agency should **support and work together with local businesses**. In particular:

- It was felt that local businesses should have a say and be involved in key decisions and that the Agency should ensure good channels of communication exist with these groups.
- Various types of business support should be offered by the Agency including the provision of advice, business spaces or co-working hubs, as well as grants or loans.
- Many respondents described a need to help small businesses to grow or at least be sustainable.

- Entrepreneurship and start-up initiatives should be supported in an innovative culture.
- Businesses should benefit from improved digital connectivity and be helped to embrace digital technologies and opportunities.

5.3 Activities related to the aim of growing and sustaining communities

A majority of respondents, and 15 out of 26 consultation events, discussed activities relating to growing and sustaining communities. Several activities were identified which could be undertaken by the Agency including:

- **Community capacity:** It was felt that the Agency should help communities to grow their capacity, play a greater role in their area's development and be self-sustaining in the long term.
- **Funding and support for community groups:** Local clubs and associations were identified as important to communities and it was felt that attention should be paid to how they can be made more resilient. Grassroots organisations should be funded over longer periods to avoid yearly uncertainty about their viability.
- **Investment in support services for communities:** Respondents suggested that youth, mental health and drug and alcohol support workers should be funded. In addition, disability, elderly and healthcare services should be supported to help sustain and grow communities.
- **Investment in town centres:** Town centres and local high streets were identified as requiring investment. Examples of possible investments included painting shop fronts, supporting local shops and post offices to stay open and developing alternative uses for vacant premises.
- **Involvement of communities:** It was considered important for communities to be engaged in the activities of the Agency and contribute on potential areas of investment. The Agency should have an open and flexible culture to encourage collaboration with communities. Both the general population and those with specific expertise should be involved in Agency decision-making. It was felt that community councils could be used by the Agency to gain local feedback. The community ownership of assets should be encouraged.
- **Social enterprise:** Respondents felt that the Agency should support social enterprise in the South of Scotland. Social enterprises were identified as providing local economic, social and environmental benefits for communities.
- **Socio-cultural offer:** It was suggested that the Agency should support activities and events such as live music, health and fitness, theatre, film and arts. Cafes, social spaces and meeting venues could be supported to create a sense of community in local areas.

5.4 Activities related to the aim of capitalising on people and resources

A majority of respondents, and 21 out of 26 consultation events, discussed activities relating to the aim of capitalising on people and resources. The following areas of activity were identified:

- **Capitalising on older and local people:** Older and local people were recognised as having significant knowledge and experience which could be used to benefit South of Scotland communities. It was felt that older workers could be retrained to maximise economic opportunities in light of the demographic challenges faced by the South of Scotland.
- **Creating a value-added economy:** Respondents suggested that the Agency could help the South of Scotland to develop more value-added operations through the local processing and manufacturing of materials to create more end products.
- **Education and skills:** It was felt that the Agency should play a role in supporting opportunities for individuals to train or upskill to enhance their employability. Respondents suggested that local schools and colleges should provide vocational training to meet local skills gaps. The Agency could encourage local businesses to upskill their staff. The Agency could work with higher education institutions to increase local skills and retain residents.
- **Networking:** Respondents felt that the Agency should provide opportunities for networking so that businesses can share their experiences and knowledge. The Agency should promote sector or cluster building to encourage collaboration and dialogue.
- **Providing opportunities for young people:** A focus should be placed on ensuring there are training and employment opportunities for young people in the South of Scotland (this is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8).
- **Research and innovation:** Respondents felt that the Agency should help to foster innovation in the South of Scotland. In addition, spending on research and development should be encouraged to facilitate the creation of new products and services.
- **Valuation and protection of assets:** It was suggested that the Agency should play a role in the identification, valuation and protection of local assets. A few respondents regarded the creation of national parks as a step which would promote tourism and give local people a sense of pride and ownership for the area.

5.5 Other potential activities of the Agency

Respondents identified several other activities which could be pursued by the Agency. These included:

- **Advocacy for South of Scotland at a national level:** The Agency should be a voice for the South of Scotland at a Scottish and UK Government level. It was expressed that the Agency should play a role in negotiating grant provision for the region on a national level.
- **Drawing on best practice for enterprise agencies and rural development:** Respondents described a need to learn from success stories and best practice elsewhere, particularly in rural areas. For example, it was felt that the South of Scotland could learn from Highlands and Islands Enterprise and other international models.
- **Strategy development:** Respondents identified a range of types of strategy which should be developed by the Agency, for example for tourism, skills planning, digital economy, local and renewable energy, inward investment, transport and housing. It was felt that the Agency should develop a long-term vision for the region such as over a 20-year period.

Chapter 6 Effective boundaries

The online consultation described a consensus that the new organisation should operate in the local authority areas of the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway due to similarities between these areas. It was explained that the Agency would need to establish relationships outside its boundaries and respondents were asked to consider what the Agency could do to work most effectively with other regional or national agencies.

This chapter outlines respondents' views on the types of cooperation which were seen as necessary for the successful operation of the Agency.

6.1 Cooperation with other agencies and institutions

Many respondents, and 21 out of 26 consultation events, discussed the need for the Agency to work with other agencies and institutions. Respondents expressed a view that the Agency could learn and work with a range of agencies and institutions including:

- **Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE):** It was felt that the Agency should learn from HIE in areas such as engaging with communities, community ownership, connecting culture and economy, supporting key sectors and new businesses, and encouraging economic development in a rural setting.
- **Scottish Enterprise:** Respondents felt that the work of the Agency should not duplicate that of Scottish Enterprise and that there should be clarity about the organisations' respective roles.
- **Educational institutions:** The Agency should help educational institutions improve provision in the region. Educational institutions should assist in providing education and training which prepares students for their careers.
- **VisitScotland:** It was felt that the Agency could work with VisitScotland to promote and engage in marketing for the South of Scotland, both within Scotland and abroad, to increase tourism.

6.2 Cooperation with Scottish local authorities

Some respondents referenced the need for the Agency to cooperate with local authorities, particularly Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Scottish Borders Council. However, respondents also suggested a need for the Agency to work with neighbouring local authorities. It was felt that some of the issues and challenges faced by Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders were similar to those in other adjacent rural areas and so cross-border initiatives would be beneficial. Working with other local authorities was seen to be useful in the development of strategies for infrastructure improvements across a wider geographical area.

6.3 Relationship with other countries of the UK

It was recognised that Agency projects were likely to cross national borders and that therefore the development of relationships with partners outside Scotland was necessary. Respondents felt that there was potential for the South of Scotland to benefit from English tourism and business opportunities. Respondents also suggested that the South of Scotland's links with Northern Ireland should be further strengthened. In addition, it was felt that the Agency's links with the wider Borderlands Initiative would be important and that there should be clarity around respective roles.

6.4 Scottish Government

Respondents felt that the Agency should advocate for the South of Scotland in Scottish Government decision-making, for example around transport infrastructure. Effective cooperation with Scottish Government was seen to be necessary to assist in the effective implementation of policy in the region.

6.5 International trade

The importance of creating trade links was emphasised and it was felt that the Agency should promote Scotland internationally and help to develop export strategies for local businesses.

6.6 Concerns over duplication

Respondents recognised the existence of related initiatives and agencies such as Scottish Enterprise, local authorities, the Borderlands Initiative and Business Gateway and felt it was important that the Agency did not duplicate their activities. Effective cooperation, integration and the sharing of knowledge and experience was seen as a way of minimising the risk of duplication.

6.7 Linking to existing strategies and policies

It was emphasised that the Agency's activities should link in with relevant existing strategies. Amongst others, the following strategies were cited:

- The UK Government's Industrial Strategy
- UN's Sustainable Development Goals
- Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal
- Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan, Energy Strategy and Energy Efficient Route Map
- Local Health and Energy Efficiency Strategy
- Food Tourism Strategy for Scotland
- Local Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Investment Plans
- Land Use Strategy

Chapter 7 Location and Board of the Agency

The online consultation detailed the importance of the Agency being accessible to businesses and communities across the South of Scotland and asked respondents to reflect on how the Agency could ensure that its services were accessible. The following examples were provided:

- The Agency could have minimal physical presence with its services delivered digitally across the area.
- There could be a single central headquarters from which all services could be provided.
- The Agency could take the form of a hub and spoke model – with its larger headquarters complemented by smaller offices in locations across the area.
- Locations could depend on the activities being provided.
- The Agency could be entirely co-located with other public-sector organisations.

In addition, the consultation asked respondents to reflect on what sort of people they felt should be on the Board of the Agency and describe the types of skills and expertise that they should have.

This chapter outlines respondents' views on where the Agency should be located to be accessible to businesses and communities. It then explores views around the types of people that were identified as being suited to a role on the Board of the Agency.

7.1 The location of the Agency

A large majority of respondents and most of the events reflected on the location of the Agency, including the criteria which should be used to decide on its location and preferences around how it could be located to ensure its accessibility.

7.1.1 Criteria

Respondents felt that the following criteria were important in deciding the location of the agency:

- **Accessibility:** Respondents described potential difficulties in having to travel across the South of Scotland to access the Agency. It was felt that offices should be spread across the region and located in areas which have available parking and are easily accessible by public transport. In addition, accessibility could be delivered through online resources and effective telephone and email communication.
- **Areas of need and potential impact:** The Agency should be based in areas with high social and economic need or where it is anticipated the Agency would have the greatest impact on communities and businesses.

- **Digital delivery:** The digital delivery of services was seen as desirable to help communication with the Agency considering the size of the covered geographical area. Digital delivery would include a user-friendly website, the use of social media and video calling (Skype and FaceTime). However, it was felt that issues with internet connectivity in some areas should be taken into account when planning for the digital delivery of services.
- **Face to face delivery:** Respondents discussed the desirability of being able to arrange face-to-face meetings with Agency staff. This was seen to be needed alongside the digital delivery of services. It was felt that face-to-face contact would help to build relationships and help Agency staff to understand local businesses and communities. Respondents suggested that Agency staff should be willing and able to visit local businesses and communities through outreach activities.

In addition, it was felt that communities should be consulted and the Agency's location should be cost-effective.

7.1.2 Place

Respondents considered a variety of ways in which the Agency could be located including:

- **Being co-located with other public-sector organisations:** Respondents felt that the Agency being co-located with other public-sector organisations could have the benefits of being cost-effective as well as improving networking and collaboration. However, co-location was questioned by those who felt it to be important for the Agency to be seen as independent and representative of new ways of thinking.
- **A hub and spoke model:** It was felt that this model would improve access to the Agency across the region and increase its visibility, including in rural areas. Offices could provide services which are specific to the local area to build on its strengths and tackle challenges.
- **A single central headquarters or two major hubs:** Respondents felt that if the Agency has a single central headquarters it could compromise its inclusiveness and responsiveness to local needs. It was felt that a hub would be needed in both the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway to increase accessibility.
- **Minimal physical presence with its services delivered digitally:** The Agency having minimal physical presence was seen to require less resources and represent the embracing of technology. In addition, it was felt that digital delivery would ensure access to the Agency across a large geographical area. However, it was noted that digital connectivity is poor in many parts of the South of Scotland and so digital delivery could exclude some businesses and communities.

- **The location would depend on the activities being provided:** It was felt that the location of the Agency could depend on the types of activities that it was undertaking.
- **Potential locations:** Respondents provided several specific locations which they felt would be appropriate for an office – the suggested locations included: Dumfries, Galashiels, Gretna, Hawick, Langholm, Lockerbie, Melrose, Moffat, Peebles and Selkirk. In addition, it was felt that the Agency should be located in town centres to increase its visibility and allow for access by public transport.

7.2 Board of the Agency

A large majority of respondents, and 9 out of 26 consultation events, discussed the Board of the Agency including who should be on the Board and what types of skills would be desirable in Board members.

7.2.1 Diverse or representative make-up of the Board

Respondents felt that the Board should be made up of a diverse group of individuals including:

- Representatives from the third sector and social enterprise
- Members of various ages
- People with disabilities
- Individuals from a range of professional backgrounds and sectors
- Unemployed people
- Representatives from educational institutions
- Those who are local and live in different parts the region

A few respondents emphasised that there should be a gender balance on the Board with an adequate representation of women in senior posts.

7.2.2 Local representatives

It was felt that local people should be members of the Board of the Agency. This could include local business people, those who are passionate about their local area, community leaders, those who understand local challenges, trade union representatives and local educators.

However, it was also felt that the Agency could benefit from having Board members from outwith the area to encourage transparency, partnership working and learning about best practice from other areas.

7.2.3 Private sector

Board members from the private sector were seen to be beneficial for the Agency. Specifically:

- Those who have experience running and growing successful businesses
- Small business owners or representatives
- Those with rural business experience
- Representatives from a variety of key sectors

In addition to private sector members, it was felt that Board membership should include people from the third sector and the public sector.

7.2.4 Young people

Respondents felt that young people should be represented on the Board to provide them with a voice in decision-making, with young people informing how the Agency creates opportunities for this group. Young people should be involved in a way that is meaningful rather than tokenistic. The inclusion of young people was seen to be important in addressing the challenge of retaining and attracting young people to the region.

7.2.5 Skills people want to see in members of the Board

A range of knowledge, experience and skills were seen to be desirable among Board members including:

- Communication and listening skills
- Being approachable
- Strategic thinking
- Energy, passion and motivation to make a difference
- Local knowledge
- Experience in social enterprise development
- Innovative thinking
- Experience in setting up and growing businesses
- Environmental expertise
- Creativity
- Leadership skills

Chapter 8 Young people

The online consultation explained that young people are less likely to stay in or move to the South of Scotland than they are in other parts of the country. A large majority of respondents, and 21 out of 26 consultation events, discussed issues relating to retaining and attracting young people to the South of Scotland.

Respondents described the importance of keeping young people in the area and encouraging graduates to move back to the South of Scotland. Increasing the availability of various types of opportunities for young people was described as a way to retain young people and increase the appeal of the region. In addition, it was felt that the region should be promoted as an attractive place to live, learn and work for young people.

This chapter outlines views on what the Agency could do to meet the interests of children and young people.

8.1 Education and training

Respondents felt that the provision of local education and training opportunities was important for retaining and attracting young people to the region. Specifically:

- Universities and colleges should offer courses that young people are interested in studying.
- Access to Higher Education should be improved through courses being offered locally or digitally.
- Educational provision should be linked to the needs of employers. It was suggested that the regional skills gaps should be identified and Further and Higher Education institutions should be helped to provide courses which address these gaps.
- Young people should have the opportunity to develop digital and IT skills.
- Courses should provide young people with the skills to work in tourism and the creative industries.
- Local companies should be encouraged to recruit apprentices to support young people into sustainable skilled work.

8.2 Employability and job opportunities

The availability of job opportunities and the provision of support for young people to enter meaningful work were seen to be important in retaining and attracting people to the South of Scotland. Specifically:

- Young people should benefit from improved career guidance and be informed about local opportunities.
- Entrepreneurship and enterprise skills should be encouraged amongst young people.
- School-leavers should be prepared for the world of work, and the Agency's activities should link into the Developing the Young Workforce programme.
- The Agency should encourage businesses to operate in the area to increase the availability of job opportunities for young people.
- There should be a focus on ensuring fair work and pay for young people in employment.
- The Agency should support the development of industries which young people want to work in such as gaming, the cycling or outdoor activity sector and creative industries.

8.3 Transport

Problems with current transport arrangements were highlighted and several suggested improvements were identified by respondents. For example:

- Lack of suitable transport was seen as a barrier to young people gaining work experience.
- Travel should be more affordable for young people. Travel should be either subsidised or free for those aged up to 21 or 26 years old.
- Public transport should be better timed to suit young people. For example, services should run in the evenings and weekends, and be linked to college start times.
- It was felt to be very challenging for young people to live in the region and commute for university or college studies due to limited transport links. Young people should be helped to commute daily to study in cities.
- Rail, buses and roads were identified as needing improvement.
- Effective transport systems were seen to be important for the social lives of young people, allowing them to be better connected to their peer groups.

8.4 Social and cultural life

Improving the region's offer in terms of its social and cultural activities was discussed in relation to retaining and attracting young people. This included areas such as cinema, theatre, music, retail, sports and night life. It was expressed that youth clubs and activities should receive funding and that the region's countryside should be promoted, for example, mountain biking and adventure sports.

8.5 Housing

Respondents felt that the availability of affordable and suitable housing for young people should be improved. Young people should have an opportunity to buy rather than rent property. It was suggested that housing could be provided through private development, housing associations, small housing trusts or co-housing initiatives.

8.6 Internet and connectivity

Improvements to digital connectivity through high speed broadband were seen to be important for both business health and retaining young people in the area. Lack of mobile connectivity was seen as a factor which was contributing to young people leaving the South of Scotland. It was felt that good digital services would increase the attractiveness of living in the South of Scotland for young people due to this group's extensive use of online technology.

8.7 Support for families

There should be a focus on making the South of Scotland an attractive place to raise a family. Support for young families could include affordable and high quality nurseries, education, housing and playgrounds. In addition, it was suggested that childcare options such as childminding should be funded or supported.

8.8 Engaging with young people

Overall, the importance of the Agency engaging directly and indirectly with young people was emphasised. It was felt that youth perspectives should feature in plans for developing the Agency and that they should be involved in decision-making. Specifically:

- The Agency should not make assumptions and should ask young people directly about their views and reasons for leaving the area by going into schools, local youth groups or conducting a survey.
- Social media was identified as a possible mechanism for engaging with young people.
- Young people should be encouraged to develop ideas for projects that they want to see implemented.
- The Agency should be inclusive and incorporate the views of unemployed and LGBT young people.
- The Agency could interact with youth workers who understand the needs of young people and can be a voice for them.

Chapter 9 Other issues

There were a range of other issues that were raised during the consultation that do not relate to the specific areas addressed in prior chapters. These 'other issues' are outlined in this chapter.

9.1 Equalities

The online consultation asked respondents to discuss ways in which the Agency could deliver opportunity and growth in the South of Scotland through:

- Promoting equality for people who share one or more protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- Combating discrimination.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Respondents offered the following suggestions about how the Agency could promote equality, combat discrimination and foster good relations:

- The Agency should be fully inclusive and incorporate the views of those from all backgrounds and experiences regardless of their race, religion, disability, age or employment status.
- The Agency should be fully accessible. This would include providing parking and disabled parking and being considerate of the fact that some may not be able to drive, sit or stand for long periods. Venues, materials and facilities used by the Agency should be accessible and plain language should be used.
- Support for those with Additional Support Needs (ASN) should be funded.
- The Agency should represent different groups, for example through having a diverse board with members who share a protected characteristic.
- A specific Agency staff role could exist to focus on the area of equalities.
- Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policies and practices should be embedded in the work of the Agency.
- The Agency's Board, CEO and staff should receive equalities training to ensure it is at the forefront of their work. In addition, businesses could be offered training in this area.
- Businesses could be monitored to ensure they are promoting equality and combating discrimination.
- The Agency should work with existing local organisations that work in equalities, for example charities with expertise in the area.

9.2 Cooperation with stakeholders and partner agencies to ensure inclusive growth enables positive social and environmental outcomes

The online consultation stated the importance of the Agency working effectively with a wide range of key stakeholders and partner agencies to ensure that inclusive growth also enables positive social and environmental outcomes. Respondents were asked to provide comments on how this should work in practice. It was felt that the Agency should:

- Build a network of stakeholders and consult them when decision-making. Stakeholders should be provided with opportunities to comment on Agency activity.
- Engage with grassroots organisations, communities and residents.
- Organise annual gatherings which bring together stakeholders to focus on inclusive growth for the region.
- Adopt a joined-up approach which facilitates the linking of different agencies and partners.
- Develop a stakeholder strategy including mapping relevant stakeholders.
- Support organisations and enterprises which are working towards achieving positive social and environmental outcomes.
- Establish working groups on key themes to facilitate stakeholder input on the policy and direction of the Agency.
- Involve environmental agencies and the third sector to identify and achieve positive environmental and social outcomes.

9.3 Structure and decision-making of the Agency

Respondents provided comments on how the Agency should be structured and make decisions. Specifically:

- It was felt that decision-making should be made at the most local level possible and the Agency should have a flat organisational structure.
- The Agency should be independent from local and national government and operate as an arm's length body.
- The Agency should be able to make swift decisions with appropriate delegation.
- The Agency should be transparent, and it should be held to account for its decision-making. In addition, it should be able to hold beneficiaries of grants or loans to account.
- The Agency should take risks, be ambitious and try new approaches.

9.4 Other powers of the Agency

9.4.1 Compulsory purchase orders

A few respondents reflected on potential benefits of the Agency having compulsory purchase powers to bring into use properties that are not currently being used or standing empty. It was suggested that the use of these properties could be offered to new businesses for low rent.

9.4.2 Planning

A few respondents suggested that the Agency should have a role in speeding up decision-making processes in terms of planning and building regulations approval. This could include the fast-tracking of major projects.

9.5 Data collection and measuring performance

Respondents felt that the effectiveness and performance of the Agency should be measured against defined criteria and that there should be clear evaluation mechanisms in place. Emphasis should be placed on considering how success should be measured, particularly in areas which are harder to quantify such as social impact. To assist in determining the impact of the Agency it was felt that baseline data should be gathered on the present situation in the South of Scotland against which progress could be measured.

Socio-economic and environmental data should be collected by the Agency so it can understand and respond to the needs of the region. The Agency should endeavour to make decisions based on relevant evidence. In addition, it was noted that alternatives to economic growth should be used to measure success, for example social and environmental outcomes, community resilience and sustainability.

9.6 Questions around the set-up of the Agency

9.6.1 The South of Scotland as defined by the Agency

A few respondents questioned the geographical boundaries of the “South of Scotland” as defined by the Agency. On one hand, they suggested that other similar rural communities – amongst others, South Ayrshire, East Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire - could be included within the scope of the Agency. It was felt that these areas face similar problems to Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders and could therefore also benefit from the Agency’s activities and its focus on combining inclusive growth, community and skills development. On the other hand, they felt that the current areas of Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders were too big and that there would be problems in joining up the two distinct areas. The analysis of the consultation responses and the engagement events, however, has shown that similar issues were identified as important by respondents across the two areas.

9.6.2 South of Scotland Economic Partnership resources

Twelve out of the 26 consultation events raised questions about the £10m in Scottish Government resources to support the work of the South of Scotland Economic Partnership in the financial year 2018/2019. Respondents wondered specifically how the resources will be distributed, the process for bidding and funding, and whether resources have already been allocated.

Appendix 1: Methodology

This Appendix outlines the methodology in terms of the coding, analysis and reporting process.

The submissions to the online consultation were downloaded from Citizen Space in Microsoft Excel format. A total of 272 responses were submitted through Citizen Space. Rocket Science checked whether any of the responses were duplicates (i.e. largely identical), and in total four responses were identified as duplicates. Two of these were submitted by individuals from the same IP-address and were largely identical to a third response also from the same IP-address, meaning that only one of these three responses was kept for analysis and the other two were not considered in the analysis. There were two organisational responses which were submitted twice and so only one of the two was considered in the analysis. Hence, there was a total of 268 responses considered in the analysis of the online consultation.

Rocket Science was sent the 26 event notes which were written by the Southern Uplands Partnership. Considering that during the engagement events participants were divided into smaller groups, not every discussion point may be covered by the event notes. As such, when the analysis refers to the number of events during which a certain point was raised, it indicates the minimum number as there may have been other events during which a point was discussed but not recorded in the event notes.

The 26 event notes and the 268 responses to the online consultation were uploaded onto NVivo. NVivo is a qualitative analysis software that allows the coding of responses into themes and sub-themes. After reviewing an initial sample of 23 consultation responses and 17 event notes, a coding framework – a structure of themes and sub-themes to which the responses can be coded – was developed. The remaining responses to the online consultation and the remaining event notes were coded with this framework. However, throughout the coding process the coding framework was further developed and refined, creating more precise themes and sub-themes for the analysis and reporting stage.

The online consultation's Respondent Information Form (RIF) asked respondents whether they are responding as an individual and organisation. In order to enable a more detailed analysis, the organisational respondents were then further categorised into one of the following categories:

- Business
- Local business organisation
- Community organisation
- National organisation
- Local authorities, including party-bound groups and particular services linked to the councils

- Other organisation responses (i.e. those that did not fit any of the other four categories)

The online consultation asked 20 open-ended questions, asking respondents about their ambitions for the South of Scotland, their view of the strengths and weaknesses of the South of Scotland, their views on the different activities of the Agency, where it should be located and who should be on its Board, which other powers the agency should have, and questions about equality and diversity in the South of Scotland. For a full list of the questions please refer to Appendix 2.

Respondents often raised similar points in their answers to different questions, so the coding and analysis process did not strictly follow the structure as set out by the questions of the consultation. Instead, the responses to different questions were coded to the themes that were established in the coding framework. As such, the analysis builds on the answers of the online consultation but is not structured nor constrained by them.

When analysis includes how often a certain point was raised across all respondents or by a particular respondent type, the following terms will be used to give account of the proportion of respondents have raised a certain point:

- “Few” means between 5% and 9%
- “Some” means between 10% and 19%
- “Many” means between 20% and 49%
- “Most” or “majority” means between 50% and 74%
- “Large majority” means between 75% to 89%
- “Consensus” means 90% or more.

Appendix 2: List of questions

The following were the questions asked during the online consultation:

1. Do you agree with our ambition outlined above?
2. What would you like to see for the South of Scotland?
3. What are your ambitions for the future economic success of the South of Scotland?
4. What are the strengths you would like to see the Agency build on?
5. What are the economic challenges you would like to see the Agency address?
6. What currently works well in the South of Scotland
7. What would you add or take away from the potential activities that the Agency could carry out across the three areas:
 - a) Drive forward the economy
 - b) Sustain communities
 - c) Capitalise on people and resources
8. What would you prioritise as the key areas of activity for the Agency?
9. What specific things could the Agency do to help you, your business, your sector or your community?
10. What could the Agency do outwith its boundaries working with other local authorities or with agencies like Highlands and Islands Enterprise to support specific projects which benefit the South of Scotland and with national agencies?
11. Which option, either from the list above or your own suggestion, do you think offers the best way to ensure the Agency is accessible to all?
12. Which criteria should be used in reaching a decision about the location of the Agency?
13. If you were to use the services of this Agency, what factors are important to you in terms of reaching it? (This might relate to the location itself, to transportation links, or to proximity to other services, or digital delivery, for example.)

14. What sort of people should be on the Board of the Agency and what sorts of skills and expertise should they have?
15. We know that young people are less likely to stay in or move to the South of Scotland than they are other parts of the country. Do you have any comments on things the Agency could do to meet the interests of children and young people?
16. In delivering opportunity and growth in the South of Scotland, how can the Agency:
 - promote equality for people who share one or more protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010
 - combat discrimination
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?
17. Do you have any other comments on how the Agency might address specific needs?
18. We want to make sure that the Agency works effectively with a wide range of key stakeholders/partner agencies to ensure that inclusive growth also enables positive social and environmental outcomes. Do you have any comments on how this should work in practice?
19. Do you have any other thoughts on powers that the Agency will need?
20. Is there anything else you wish to say about the operation of the Agency?

Appendix 3: List of organisations that responded

This Appendix lists all the organisations that responded to the consultation and that agreed that their response could be published with their name.

Businesses

Brand Satellite
Charlotte Developments Ltd
Dean R. Woodhouse Photography
Galloway Cycling Holidays
Jas.P.Wilson
Muirhall Energy
People and Land Ltd
Process Plant and Machinery Ltd

Community organisations

Aardvark Aalternative Aaddictions
Berwickshire association for voluntary services CVS, TSI Partner
Biggar and District Civic Society
Creetown Initiative and Barholm Enterprise
Dalbeattie Community Initiative
DG Outdoor Access Trust
DG Unlimited
Dumfries and Galloway Small Communities Housing Trust
Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company
Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere
Isle of Whithorn Community Council
Live Borders
Live Borders
Moniaive Festival Village, Glencairn Community Council, Moniaive Gala Committee
Newcastleton & District Community Trust
Newcastleton community council
Solway Firth Partnership

The Southern Uplands Partnership
The Stove Network
Tweedsmuir Community Company
VisitMoffat

Local authority

Dumfries and Galloway Council
Scottish Borders Council
SNP group on Scottish Borders Council

Local business organisations

Dumfries and Galloway's Creative Industries Working Group
Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership
Timber Transport Forum
Visit South West Scotland

National organisations

Community Energy Scotland
Community Land Scotland
Co-operatives UK
COSLA
Creative Scotland
Cultural Enterprise Office
Development Trusts Association Scotland
Federation of Small Businesses Scotland
Paths for All
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Royal Society of Edinburgh
Scotland's Regeneration Forum
Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)
Scottish Care
Scottish Council for Development and Industry
Scottish Enterprise

Scottish Funding Council
Scottish Land and Estates
Scottish Natural Heritage
Scottish property federation
Scottish Trades Union Congress
Skills Development Scotland
Sniffer
The Open University in Scotland
United Kingdom Forest Products Association
Zero Waste Scotland

Other organisational responses

Buccleuch Property
Changeworks
Eildon Group
South of Scotland Alliance
Waverley Housing



Scottish Government
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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at
The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
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