

**Minutes of the 7th meeting of the Scotland CAN DO Innovation Forum
Edinburgh, 06 June 2017**

The following members were present:

Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy (Co-Chair)
Shirley-Anne Somerville, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science (Co-Chair)
Prof. Patricia Findlay, University of Strathclyde Business School
Will Hutton, Big Innovation Centre
Sandy Kennedy, Entrepreneurial Scotland
Peter McColl, Nesta
Prof. Irene McAra-McWilliam, Glasgow School of Art
Geoff Mulgan, Nesta
Derek Norwood, Devro plc
Dr Tracy Shimmield, Lyell Centre

Partner and Delivery Organisations:

Kevin Baughan, Innovate UK
Donna Chisholm, Highland and Islands Enterprise
Stuart Fancey, Scottish Funding Council
Ian McCoull, Scottish Enterprise

In Attendance:

Audrey Cumberland, Chair Colleges Scotland
Steven Drost, Codebase
Siobhan Jordan, Interface
Ken Sutherland, Toshiba Medical Visualization Systems
Aileen McKechnie, Scottish Government
Richard Rollison, Scottish Government
Andrew Fowlie, Scottish Government
David Robb, Scottish Government
Liz Shevlin, Scottish Government
David Wilkes, Innovate UK

Apologies:

Jamie Coleman, Codebase
James Dunbar, New Start Highland
Melfort Campbell, Imes Group
Cathie Cowan, Health Innovation Partnership Board
Prof. Dame Anne Glover, University of Aberdeen,
Prof. Andrew Morris
Erin Platts, Silicon Valley Bank
Ken Scott, Alexander Dennis Ltd
John Waddell, Archangel
Jim Watson, Scottish Enterprise

Secretariat:

Karen McAvenue, Scottish Government Innovation Strategy Team
Lynne Blair, Scottish Government Innovation Strategy Team
June Love, Scottish Government Innovation Strategy Team

Purpose

1. This note provides an overview of the key points arising during the seventh meeting of the Scotland CAN DO Innovation Forum (henceforth referred to as 'the Forum').

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome, Opening Remarks

2. Mr Wheelhouse welcomed all to the meeting and advised that Phase 2 of the Enterprise and Skills Review would be published shortly and a later item would focus on the innovation chapter. He stressed the importance of the evidence gathering and thanked all who had contributed. The Minister noted that the latest Community Innovation Survey showed that Scotland has moved from the third to the top quartile of innovation active businesses in the EU28. There are still challenges to overcome but this move is a positive one.
3. Ms Somerville was pleased that the Forum would have the opportunity to hear about college innovation and noted the benefits of collaboration, highlighting the work of Interface. She added her thanks to those who had been involved in the Enterprise and Skills Review and the vital role of the Forum in going forward; a later item would look at this in more detail.

Agenda Item 2 – Minutes/Matters Arising

4. The Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.

Agenda Item 3 – College Innovation

5. Audrey Cumberford was invited to deliver her presentation. Selected points are detailed below:
 - Colleges' reach is local, regional, national, and international. They are not a silver bullet but they are in the mix and work with employers directly.
 - There is a need to make the role of colleges more explicit but visibility is increasing; the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Strategic Plan and the formation of the College Innovation Working Group will help keep this momentum.
 - The new regional structure, as well as the Enterprise and Skills Review, and the Innovation Action Plan present huge opportunities.
 - Recognition that colleges need to be more flexible and create capacity.
 - Their main purpose is to teach but additional funding is required to work with businesses hence the need to engage with companies on a commercial basis.
 - Colleges currently engage directly with 4 of the 8 Innovation Centres (IC); Construction, Data Lab, Aquaculture, and Digital Health & Care institute. The IC remits and funds appear to drive them towards universities so broadening this interaction could be difficult.
 - Use of Innovation Vouchers in colleges has been limited: the £5k value of the voucher is often outweighed by the costs of obtaining it. The SFC, with Interface, are currently looking at the process and identifying any barriers.

Agenda Item 4 – College Innovation Discussion

6. Ms Somerville thanked Audrey and invited a general discussion, during which the following points and comments were made:
 - The ability of colleges to reach large numbers of businesses is important and their potential to reach significantly more is recognised.
 - SDS feed into the curricula but there is no way for businesses to do so to ensure future employees have the required skills.
 - If we want businesses to invest in R&D and innovation we need to invest to provide the correct skills for their staff.
 - SMEs do not all require the same assistance to innovate or grow: new, scaling businesses, especially in the tech sector, will require different approaches to those designed for older, more traditional companies.

- Can innovation be taught? Is it a different mind-set and not necessarily a teachable skill?
- The regional reach of colleges means that they cover many Local Authorities as do businesses customer areas: this does not make it easy for businesses to obtain help as each LA will offer different assistance.
- Businesses value relationships but these can take time to develop, which is challenging to both parties.

Agenda Item 5 – Enterprise and Skills Review

7. Mr Wheelhouse invited Karen McAvenue and Richard Rollison to deliver their presentation which outlined the evidence gathered for the Enterprise and Skills review, and how this fed into the report's recommendations and the innovation action plan.

8.

Agenda Item 6 – Enterprise and Skills Review Discussion

9. Mr Wheelhouse thanked Karen and Richard and invited a discussion, extracts of which follow.
- Members agreed that cultural change is required and it is vital to get the message out that innovation is important.
 - Workplace innovation will play an important part in this, although that can be problematic and require difficult conversations with employers.
 - It is essential to get young people in schools to start thinking innovatively.
 - There were mixed views on a single portal but there was recognition of the need to assist businesses to change their behaviours.

Agenda Item 7 - Any Other Business

Forum Membership

10. Ms Somerville thanked all for their contributions and advised that the membership and remit of the Forum would be revised to align with the new purpose Karen and Richard outlined in their presentation.
11. She further confirmed that the purpose of the revised Forum going forward will be to support the improvement of Scotland's business innovation performance by:
- Providing effective scrutiny and challenge of progress against the Innovation Action Plan and actions arising from the Enterprise and Skills Review
 - Considering and providing advice on the potential impacts of emerging and longer term trends and issues on business innovation (e.g. AI, Low Carbon).
12. Refreshing the Forum will also mean that membership will be reviewed and the Forum Secretariat will be contacting members shortly. It is intended to include a mix of new and existing members with an emphasis on strengthening business membership.

Health Pilot

13. Ms Somerville invited Ken Sutherland to provide an update on the Health Pilot in the Highlands and Islands. Ken advised that there were 2 points to draw out.
- Level of interest good from SBRI.
 - We need to focus on the demand side.
 - Create the demand and focus on this. Getting information directly to patients will help, but clinicians need to think differently and this is where we could see some resistance.
 - There is a need to change the culture in the NHS or we won't be able to roll out innovations or enable scale-up.
 - More work and more resource is required.
14. Ministers ended by thanking all the members for their participation in the Forums, and their valuable contributions towards creation of the Innovation Action Plan.