

DISCUSSION PAPER – CREATING A NEW ENTERPRISE AGENCY FOR THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND

Host: Mr Brown, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work

Facilitators: Prof Russel Griggs OBE, Chair of the South of Scotland Economic Partnership; Amanda Burgauer, Scottish Rural Action and Director at Arena Peak Ltd and member of South of Scotland Economic Partnership

Scribe: Sandra Reid, South of Scotland Economic Development Team, Scottish Government

Overview

It is an exciting time for the South of Scotland. The Scottish Government is committed to establishing a new Enterprise Agency for the South of Scotland. In advance of the statutory body, it has established the South of Scotland Economic Partnership. The Scottish and UK Governments are also committed to supporting a Growth Deal for the Borderlands. The workshop provides an opportunity to explore and influence the way forward.

Context

South of Scotland Enterprise Agency

One of the key recommendations of the Scottish Government's Enterprise and Skills Review was the Government's commitment to establishing a new enterprise agency for the South of Scotland. The initial, high level aims for the new Agency are:

- To drive the economy forward with growth that creates opportunities for all, where the benefits of increased prosperity are shared;
- To sustain and grow communities so that people thrive in the places where they live and work; and
- To capitalise on people and resources of the South, developing the skills and making the most of assets to address exclusion and assist growth.

The Scottish Government intends to introduce legislation later in 2018 to establish the agency so that, with Parliamentary agreement, the new can begin operations on 1 April 2020. It is currently consulting on the legislation and the new Agency. More detail about the consultation are at: <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/consultation-new-enterprise-agency-south-scotland>.

South of Scotland Economic Partnership

To ensure that the South of Scotland benefits from a new approach as soon as possible, the Scottish Government has established the South of Scotland Economic Partnership. The partnership is chaired by Professor Russel Griggs OBE, with its day to day activity coordinated by Rob Dickson. The partnership brings together the private, third and further and higher education sectors, as well as the seven key public sector organisations supporting economic development in the South of Scotland. The partnership is co-ordinating a programme of engagement with communities and businesses. More details about the events can be found at: <http://www.sup.org.uk/sosep.asp>.

Borderlands Growth Deal

The Scottish and UK Governments are also committed to supporting a growth deal for the Borderlands which includes Dumfries and Galloway and Scottish Borders local authority areas, as well as Carlisle City, Cumbria and Northumberland. The authorities are working together to develop a proposition that makes the area more attractive to investors, visitors and those wishing to relocate, includes projects on improving transport links and digital connectivity, including broadband connections, as well as schemes that provide clean, cheap energy. There are also strands looking at developing skills and at putting in place the conditions to enable more and better paid jobs to be created across the area. More details about the growth deal can be found at: <http://www.borderlandsgrowth.com>.

Possible areas for discussion

- What should the future South of Scotland economy look like?
- What strengths in the South can the new Agency build on and what economic challenges can it help address?
- What should Agency's priorities be? What activities should it undertake?
- How can it help meet the needs of young people in the South of Scotland?
- How can it support the needs of businesses and communities across the area?
- What sort of skills and expertise does the Agency need to succeed?