

**Special Shetland Islands Council****30 October 2013****Review of Tertiary Education**

Report No. DSD-17-13-F

**Report Presented by: Director Development Services****Development Services****1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report develops the option of establishing a single independent entity for the Shetland Tertiary Education, Research and Training (STERT) sector and seeks approval for the formation of the Project Board as outlined in previous report (DSD-11-13-F) and endorsed by Council on 12 June 2013 (Min Ref: 54/13).

**2.0 Decision Required**

- 2.1 That Shetland Islands Council RESOLVES to support the establishment of a Project Board tasked with confirming the viability of a single governance and delivery model for the STERT sector. Membership of this Project Board to be drawn from the participating Council departments, relevant “partner” organisations and other advisors as required. Key deliverables of the Project Board to be the production of a detailed business model and implementation plan, for consideration by the Council and other relevant bodies.

**3.0 Detail**Background

- 3.1 The Council commissioned an extensive review of the STERT sector in December 2012.
- 3.2 This review was completed by May 2013 and a final report circulated detailing the existing arrangements, the challenges faced by the sector and an appraisal of the perceived options.

## Initial Proposal

- 3.3 A list of options for a future governance model was developed and the following proposal made to Council (under DSD-11-13-F):
- 3.3.1 (Para 3.11) That the Shetland College and NAFC Marine Centre are joined into one new independent organisation.
  - 3.3.2 (Para 3.12) That the majority of Train Shetland activities including vocational training and short courses are transferred to the new college organisation. Training activities solely targeted at SIC are retained in the SIC.
  - 3.3.3 (Para 3.13) That the future of Adult Learning be determined by the review of Community Planning & Development and the separate report to Council in early October 2013.

## Council Decision

- 3.4 The proposal was accepted in full with the proviso that para 3.12 be amended to remove the final sentence: *“Training activities solely target at SIC are retained in the SIC”*; and:
- 3.5 The Director of Development Services was instructed to form a Strategy Group which would subsequently inform the creation of a Project Board.

## Current Position

- 3.6 The Strategy Group has since met and the project has made considerable progress with discussions surrounding the future governance and delivery model well advanced.
- 3.7 The participating Council departments and partner organisations: Shetland College (SC), Train Shetland (TS), Adult Learning (AL), Shetland Fisheries Training Centre Trust (SFTCT), University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), Scottish Funding Council (SFC), Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Highland and Islands Enterprise (HIE) have all endorsed the principles outlined in the initial project brief and their willingness to participate in the Project Board.
- 3.8 Whilst the majority of the participants come under Council authority, there are distinct organisational, legal, contractual, asset and financial matters to be addressed. The Project Board governance arrangements will reflect this situation and ensure that authority to proceed is secured from all relevant stakeholders at each stage.

## **4.0 Implications**

### Strategic

#### 4.1 Delivery On Corporate Priorities

The STERT sector review links to the corporate priority of maximising the opportunities for further, higher and vocational learning opportunities, both for school leavers and individuals returning to learning.

#### 4.2 Community /Stakeholder Issues

Stakeholders have been involved in all consultations conducted as part of the initial review and several stakeholder forums will be established as part of the project plan.

#### 4.3 Policy And/Or Delegated Authority

This report impacts on several service areas and current governance arrangements require presentation before full Council.

#### 4.4 Risk Management

A full risk management plan will operate for the duration of the project.

#### 4.5 Equalities, Health And Human Rights

There are no equalities implications arising from this report but as options for change are developed, the equalities impact of those proposals will need to be considered.

#### 4.6 Environmental

None.

### Resources

#### 4.7 Financial

A detailed project implementation budget will be prepared. The aim is to deliver the project from within existing Directorate's budget. "Core" funding arrangements for all four organisations are currently under review, with reductions having already been implemented and further savings expected.

#### 4.8 Legal

Legal resources will be required and will be detailed within the project plan.

#### 4.9 Human Resources

HR resources will be required and will be detailed within the project plan.

#### 4.10 Assets And Property

Asset and Property advice will be required and will be detailed within the project plan.

### **5.0 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The creation of a sustainable model for tertiary education, research and training is a priority for both the Council and the wider Shetland community. These governance recommendations are the next step in an ongoing process to achieve a sustainable model which fits with Regional and National frameworks for delivery of FE, HE, Research, Training and they will be integrated with schools service and economic priorities.

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