



Chair's Report

Purpose

1. This paper provides Council with a report from the Chair on her key external engagements and other relevant business.

External Engagements

2. The Chair's key external engagements are noted at Annex A.

Risk assessment

3. There are no risks associated with this paper.

Recommendations

4. The Council is invited to:
 - Note the content of the report.

Financial implications

5. There are no direct financial implications associated with this paper.

Publication

6. This paper will be published on the Council's website.

Further information

7. Contact: Alice Brown, Chair (email: abrown@sfc.ac.uk).

Chair's key external engagements

Appointment of Chair of SQA - 13 March

Meeting of the Panel regarding the Scottish Government's appointment of Chair of SQA.

The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) Young Candidates Nomination Group - 13 March

Meeting of the Working Group of the RSE looking at Nomination of Young Candidates for Fellowship.

Appointment of Chair of Forth Valley College - 15 March

Meeting of the Panel regarding the Scottish Government's appointment of Chair of Forth Valley College.

Ministerial Review Group of the Enterprise and Skills Review (with John Kemp) - 29 March

This meeting discussed the presentations from the overall review and the individual workstreams. (Because of a delay to other business in Parliament, the Cabinet Secretary was unable to attend this meeting.)

Presenting at Colleges Scotland Board residential meeting (joint session with SG) (with John Kemp) followed by dinner - 30 March

We discussed the major issues facing the sector and the ways in which the SFC, the Government and the sector could work together. At the meeting Aileen McKechnie outlined the key aspects of the Cabinet Secretary, Keith Brown's statement to the Scottish Parliament that afternoon in relation to the Enterprise and Skills Review. It was confirmed that the Board of SFC and the other agencies involved would not be replaced.

New Student Accommodation Official Opening – 12 April

I attended the official opening by the Princess Royal of the new student accommodation at the University of Edinburgh. The accommodation – O'Shea Hall - is named after the Principal, Professor Sir Tim O'Shea, who will be retiring early next year.

Catch-up meeting with Tavish Scott MSP (with John Kemp) - 18 April

We discussed issues related to NAFC in Shetland and a number of other wider issues relating to the tertiary sector.

Strathclyde University Dinner – 19 April

Attended Strathclyde University's Dinner in Glasgow and had the opportunity to meet with other guests from the tertiary sector and from other stakeholder organisations.

Staff Meeting – 26 April

Attended Staff Meeting and referred to the current position in relation to the Enterprise and Skills Review; provided an update on the Government's plans for the appointment of a new Chair and replacements for Board members who will stand down from the Board this year; and the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive.

Quarterly Ministerial meeting with Shirley-Anne Somerville (with John Kemp) - 27 April

This was our regular quarterly meeting. We discussed a range of issues including the Section 22 reports on three colleges, the way in which SFC alerts the Government to potential risks, the Minister's recent engagement with Colleges Scotland, strategic funding and capital funding.

Chrystal Macmillan Lecture, University of Edinburgh – 27 April

I attended the above lecture on the invitation of Professor Fiona Mackay and the dinner afterwards. The lecture covered proposals for reform of the House of Commons and the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, Ken McIntosh, provided a response to the lecture and also attended the dinner.

Meeting with Richard Williams, Principal Heriot Watt University (with John Kemp and Stuart Fancey) - 3 May

We met Professor Williams, largely in his role as Universities Scotland's lead on international issues, to discuss potential joint work in this area.

SDM at the University of Strathclyde (with Marlene Wood and Michael Cross) – 5 May

I was part of the team who conducted the SDM at the University of Strathclyde. The Principal of the University and other key staff and Board members attended and it was a positive and constructive day.

Enterprise and Skills Review Ministerial Review Group meeting (with John Kemp) - 10 May

The meeting discussed draft reports of the workstreams of the review.

Shortlisting meeting for SQA Chair appointment – 11 May

Attended the above meeting, chaired by Fiona Robertson at the Scottish Government, and drew up short list for this appointment.

RSE New Fellows Ceremony and Reception – 15 May

I attended the ceremony and reception for newly elected Fellows of the RSE. It was a particular pleasure to see Professor Maggie Kinloch being appointed as a Fellow in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the creative arts.

SDM at SRUC (with Professor Anton Muscatelli and John Kemp) – 23 May

I was part of the team who conducted the SDM at SRUC. The Principal of the University and other key staff and Board members attended and it was a positive and constructive day.

SFC/NES Chairs and Chief Executives meeting (with John Kemp, Stuart Fancey and Martin Smith) - 25 May

This annual meeting discussed the joint work between our two organisations.

Interviews for Chair of SQA – 30 May

I, with others, conducted interviews for the Chair of SQA.

Shortlisting Meeting for Chair of Forth Valley College – 31 May

I, with others, attended the shortlisting meeting for the Chair of Forth Valley College. It was decided that I would not take part in the interviews on 8 June because of a potential conflict of interest.

Interviews for Chair of SQA – 1 June

I, with others, conducted another interview for the Chair of SQA. Names have been recommended to the Cabinet Secretary, John Swinney, and it is expected that a decision will be made towards the end of June.

Appraisals – 7 June

I conducted three appraisals with members of the Board.