

Skills and Employment Futures Report – Presentation noted etc.

5 The Cabinet heard a presentation by Professor Alan McGregor, University of Glasgow, in respect of progressing the 5 recommendations relevant to the skills and labour market contained in the Commission for Economic Growth's report, "Looking Forward to the Future: The Glasgow City Region Economy", which had been circulated to Cabinet members in April 2020 for approval of proposed leads and next steps for progressing the 28 recommendations in that report, together with monitoring arrangements and funding for the work. During his presentation Professor McGregor highlighted

- (1) a number of problems that were likely to become more entrenched, as well as those that were likely to re-emerge, in light of COVID-19;
- (2) potential labour market scenarios in the wake of Brexit, including loss of employment due to tariff barriers, reduced inward investment and reduction in EU workers in the labour supply;
- (3) that the skills and labour chapter within the Commission report had focused on 3 key labour market challenges through to 2050, namely, digitalisation of employment and the rise of artificial intelligence, long run changes in demand for skills and the levelling out of the number of Scotland's 16-65 year olds;
- (4) in detail, the Commission reports' 5 key skills and labour market recommendations and that there was no reason to revise these in light of COVID-19;
- (5) that whilst the skills chapter within the Commission report paid little attention to the climate emergency, a variety of skills would be required in order to deliver the city's net zero carbon target by 2030, including:-
 - (a) retrofitting existing homes and buildings to make them more energy efficient, with an estimated initial programme cost of £10-12 billion;
 - (b) opportunities in specific trades, including external wall insulation which was a major part of retrofitting; and
 - (c) manufacturing opportunities within the GCR; and
- (6) that GCR could not control global economic forces and major technological changes, but with the necessary powers could build an agile and first class skills system.

After consideration and having noted a number of points raised by Cabinet members, which were responded to by Professor McGregor, the Cabinet

- (i) thanked Professor McGregor for his presentation; and

- (ii) agreed that the Programme Management Office develop the matter further with the Scottish Government with a view to creating a more agile and forward looking skills system throughout the GCR.