

Alistair Dodds
Chair
Highlands and Islands Enterprise

17 December 2020

Dear Alistair,

HIE – GUIDANCE 2020-21

Introduction

1. Following our interim Strategic Letter of Guidance to the Enterprise and Skills Agencies in April 2020, I am writing to set out further guidance on my expectations and priorities for Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) for the remainder of 2020-21.
2. I anticipate that the 2021-22 Strategic Letter of Guidance will issue in April 2021 and will focus on the priorities for each of the agencies for the next financial year.

Strategic context

COVID-19 recovery

3. This year has brought with it challenges that none of us could have foreseen. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our economy, delivery of skills support and educational establishments in a way that is truly unprecedented. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and all your staff for the creative and innovative ways in which HIE pivoted its focus at such short notice to support Scotland's businesses, communities, learners and the wider economy.
4. I particularly welcome the flexibility HIE has demonstrated in responding to uncertain and fast moving circumstances and recognise that this has impacted on your ability to deliver other priorities. HIE's role in delivering the bespoke funds created in response to the pandemic has been key to ensuring that a significant number of businesses across Scotland can continue to operate and adapt to the changing environment. The efforts of your staff in supporting this delivery have been invaluable. It is critical that HIE continues to be adaptable, flexing where necessary over the remainder of this financial year, and that you respond to emerging need with a clear sense of urgency.

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5. The Scottish Government's priority is dealing with the economic, health and social crisis brought about by COVID-19. However, it is vital that we also consider how we can emerge from the crisis stronger and with a renewed focus on ensuring that Scotland's economy is as competitive, robust, fair and sustainable as it can be. The pandemic is shaping our economy, both in the immediate and longer term. Businesses, workforces and working practices are changing. I ask that you consider what can be done differently to support our growth sectors and help our businesses, third sector and social enterprises, and our communities to adapt successfully.

Programme for Government and the Economic Recovery Implementation Plan

6. Our Programme for Government 2020 (PfG) set out Ministers' strong belief that in recovering from COVID-19 it must not be business as usual, that we need to use this moment to make significant advances to deliver a recovery that is led by green growth and also promotes fairness and wellbeing. The PfG commits to:
 1. a national mission to create new jobs, good jobs and green jobs, with a particular focus on young people;
 2. promoting lifelong health and wellbeing; and
 3. advancing equality and helping our young people grasp their potential.
7. The PfG also takes account of the findings of the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery and the Scottish Government's response, the Economic Recovery Implementation Plan. Delivering on the actions set out in the Implementation Plan will require a cohesive and coordinated approach and we have committed to working in partnership with HIE and the other Enterprise and Skills Agencies, business, trade unions, third and voluntary sector bodies and local authorities to achieve this. Discussion with the Enterprise and Skills Agencies on prioritising activity in support of this work will continue to take place through the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board.
8. I look to HIE to ensure that its work over the remainder of this financial year aligns with the priorities set out in the PfG, the Economic Recovery Implementation Plan, and our wider economic strategy. I expect HIE to continue to work in partnership with the Scottish Government and the other Enterprise and Skills Agencies to harness your collective expertise and knowledge, shaping our new economic future and determining how best we respond to emerging opportunities over the coming months.

Brexit

9. I do not underestimate the risks posed by the ongoing uncertainty around Brexit and the impact that this has on HIE's own activity, as well as the advice and support it provides to businesses. The Scottish Government is committed to continued engagement with the UK Government on key issues of relevance to the Enterprise and Skills Agencies, such as new trading relationships and the UK Internal Market. I am grateful for HIE's engagement with my officials on these issues and ask that it continues to share its views and experience. I am aware that continued uncertainty around the post-Brexit mechanism for funding approval and compliance is particularly difficult. I welcome HIE's valuable contribution to the Building Resilience Steering Group and the work being taken forward to increase the preparedness of businesses.

Fairer, Stronger Workforce

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10. I look to HIE to continue to exemplify Fair Work practices, building on the significant amount of work that has been done to engage and consult with your own staff during the crisis. I ask that HIE continues with this positive approach and in doing so, reflects on the refreshed COVID-19 Statement of Fair Work Practices, as well as the Fair Work Convention's Framework. It is critical that all workforces are able to benefit from fair working practices and I ask that HIE progresses our Fair Work First approach in the services and interventions it provides - supporting workers' wellbeing, providing them with an effective voice in decision-making, promoting equal pay and helping their business to recover from COVID-19.
11. In addition, the Young Person's Guarantee will ensure that young people are given the chance to succeed despite the economic impacts of COVID-19. The interim report describes the overarching ambition and the expectation that a range of stakeholders, including the Enterprise and Skills Agencies, will contribute to its development and delivery. I recognise that alignment between the Young Person's Guarantee and the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board will be crucial going forward and would ask HIE to consider how best it can contribute to this important agenda, not only through supporting clients but specifically as an employer.

Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board - Collaboration and Alignment

12. The Strategic Plan developed by the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board provides long term direction to Scotland's Enterprise and Skills Agencies and I ask that HIE continues to make progress against the missions and actions set out in the Plan, and as agreed and reviewed. I also ask that you actively collaborate with the other agencies in your business planning by engaging with their Chief Executive Officers and Boards. The other agencies will be asked to involve you in their planning.
13. In July 2020 the Strategic Board published its recommendations for mitigating the labour market impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. Alongside your participation in the Young Person's Guarantee scheme, I ask that you work collaboratively to implement the actions set out in the Scottish Government's response, Addressing the Labour Market Emergency, and consider the practicalities of introducing the changes required to address rising unemployment, giving consideration to the potential for sharing resources.
14. I also look to HIE to continue to work with the other Enterprise and Skills Agencies to provide budget for, and support, the Strategic Board's Analytical Unit.

HIE's Contribution

15. In line with past letters of guidance, I have set out a series of ambitions and operational asks of HIE at Annex A. I ask that you consider the ways in which HIE can deliver against these ambitions, whilst still maintaining the necessary focus on supporting economic recovery in response to COVID-19 and preparing for EU Exit. Further information on Scottish Government policies of relevance to the Enterprise Agencies is included at Annex B.

HIE's Budget 2020-21

16. Your core budget is detailed below. However, I would like to acknowledge the significant effort that each of the agencies has put into delivering the Scottish Government's £2.3bn

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support package for businesses, including the £30m HIE has administered through the PERF, Hardship and Hotel Support Programme funds.

17. For the remainder of 2020-21, I look to HIE to make decisions that ensure the funds provided to it by the Scottish Government are used to progress the priorities set out in this letter, and in particular to (i) support recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 through the retention of existing jobs and the creation of new jobs, with a particular focus on young people, (ii) provide support to sectors most exposed to the economic effects of COVID-19 (iii) increase the preparedness of businesses for Brexit, and (iv) drive green and inclusive growth and the transition to net zero.
18. The budget allocation and monitoring letter issued in April 2020 confirmed your budget for 2020-21. Any in-year transfers, both in or out of the budget, will be detailed at the Autumn and Spring Budget Revisions, published each year and subject to Parliamentary scrutiny. I welcome HIE's approach to working openly with officials to consider ways of prioritising and maximising spend within the confines of this settlement. I ask that you maintain a forensic scrutiny on your financial position and seek all opportunities to secure efficiencies.

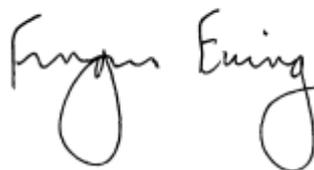
Financial Year 20-21	(£m)
Fiscal Resource	25.495
Fiscal Capital	25.500
Financial Transactions	2.000
Total Fiscal	52.995
Non Cash	5.095
Total Budget	58.090

19. All agencies should ensure that they follow the updated Accountable Officer (AO) Template process set out within the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM). The AO template should be used for any new spending decisions over £1m for new COVID or non-COVID expenditure as well as any spend relating to EU transition. Draft templates should be shared with finance business partners as early as possible for review and SG finance should be engaged at the outset of any new spending proposals.

Conclusion

I hope the direction set out in this letter is helpful to inform your business planning for the remainder of 2020-21. I and my Ministerial colleagues are grateful for the contribution HIE continues to make to realising the Government's purpose and I look forward to continuing to work with you as we navigate these challenging times.

Yours sincerely,



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HIE's contribution to Scottish Government's priorities

1. I welcome the commitment HIE has demonstrated in leading on and working collaboratively with other stakeholders and partners in reacting to the impacts of COVID-19. I would again like to record my thanks for your flexibility and hard work during this period.

Looking ahead

2. For the remainder of 2020-21, I look to HIE to continue to make decisions that ensure the funds provided to it by Scottish Government are used to respond flexibly, creatively and with urgency to the economic crisis. In doing so, I ask that you focus on creating the conditions for a green, wellbeing economy underpinned by sustainable and inclusive economic growth. And that you continue to meet your statutory obligations and achieve the outcomes set out in HIE's Strategy and Operating Plan 2019-2022.
3. At the heart of these expectations is that HIE operates as a highly effective public body focussed on improving outcomes, with particular emphasis on supporting those people, places and communities that have been adversely affected by the pandemic. I expect to see open and radical collaboration across a range of organisations, including business, private and public sector and communities to deliver the Place Principle. In particular, I would like to see an emphasis on community wealth building as means of strengthening local economies.

Partnership working

4. I expect HIE, Scottish Enterprise, South of Scotland Enterprise and Skills Development Scotland to continue to work together with Business Gateway to deliver an effective and aligned business support system. It is essential that duplication is avoided and that businesses are able to access an improved and streamlined service that supports both their recovery and their ability to adapt and shape our new economy.
5. Ensuring a recovery that is strong, green and fair will require looking beyond our borders for opportunities and collaboration. I expect HIE to play an active role in pursuing opportunities for trade and investment, in accordance with the actions set out in A Trading Nation, our recently published Inward Investment Plan and the forthcoming Capital Investment Plan. It is essential that work continues to build international awareness of our capital investment proposition and market making, and that it aligns with the Scottish National Investment Bank's strategic missions, ensuring that we send a clear message that Scotland is a good place to do business.
6. Building on the collaborative and innovative efforts demonstrated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I expect close partnership working to continue in support of our commitment to establish a Scottish Health and Industry Partnership, maximising the role of Scottish business and industry in supplying the NHS and other organisations involved in delivering healthcare.

Inclusive Economic Growth

7. Community planning remains an important means through which HIE can work with others to support the conditions for inclusive economic growth in local areas. It is in this context that community wealth building can play a key role in delivering genuinely inclusive economic opportunity, including ensuring that appropriate support is provided to enable our town centres to thrive.
8. Against this background I acknowledge the role HIE continues to play in supporting the implementation of growth deals and development of associated economic partnerships or

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cross authority collaborations, such as the Convention of the Highlands and Islands. I expect you to continue to support these local authority-led partnerships and to use their growth deal programmes as a catalyst for realising longer term ambitions to renew and grow regional economies by encouraging business growth and protecting and creating high quality jobs. It is vital that our efforts and resources in the region align well to maximise the collective benefits and impacts achieved. I look to HIE to bring the full weight of your regional knowledge, expertise and connections to bear to make the deal programmes as successful as possible.

9. In accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, I expect HIE to play a key role in advancing equality of opportunity for those who experience exclusion - particularly younger people, women, disabled people and people from ethnic minorities. I want see evidence of this in your investment portfolio both as a factor in determining investments and as an outcome of investments. Equally I wish to see an emphasis on the Fairer Scotland Duty, narrowing the gaps in outcomes which result from socio economic disadvantage ensuring that investments create a fairer, more equal, Scotland.

Climate Change

10. I expect HIE to play a key role in helping Scotland achieve its ambitious Climate Change targets and ensuring a green recovery from COVID-19 that delivers economic, social and environmental opportunities. I expect you to work with businesses to help them transition towards a net-zero economy. I also acknowledge the role that Wave Energy Scotland has played to date and look to HIE to continue to ensure that renewable energy opportunities such as Wave Energy Scotland continue to be explored and developed.

Business Innovation

11. We have set ourselves ambitious targets for improving our innovation performance and HIE plays a key role in helping us to achieve these targets. I expect you to work closely with the Scottish Government, the other enterprise agencies, universities, industry and delivery bodies as we co-ordinate and collaborate on innovation activities that will make a substantial contribution towards our objectives for inclusive economic growth and a green recovery.

Digital Economy

12. I expect HIE to place emphasis on the growth and development of both the demand and supply sides of Scotland's digital economy, with a particular focus on how digital developments can help aid future recovery and new ways of working.

Tourism

13. I expect HIE to work closely with other public sector and regional partners to support the ongoing recovery of the tourism sector, following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Actions should focus on the Scottish Government's response to the Tourism Taskforce report and recommendations, set within the overall context of the tourism strategy launched in March 2020. Specifically, HIE should work with VisitScotland, Scottish Enterprise and South of Scotland Enterprise to deliver a tourism recovery plan to retain local employment and realisation of the Scottish Government's ambition for Scotland to be a leading global destination for sustainable, low carbon tourism built on fair work principles.

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Fair Work

14. Fair Work is central to achieving the Purpose and outcomes set out in the National Performance Framework, particularly with reference to our ambitions for sustainable and inclusive growth. It is at the heart of Scotland's economic recovery and the Scottish Government's ambition to move toward a wellbeing economy and to become a Fair Work Nation by 2025. In the year ahead, I expect HIE to apply three of the five Fair Work First criteria (payment of the real Living Wage, no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts and action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workforce) to grants and other financial support of £100k and above, where this helps create or retain jobs. I also look to HIE to explore opportunities for applying Fair Work First to appropriate procurements and to engage with Scottish Government's Procurement Directorate to learn from wider public sector procurement practice.
15. I expect HIE to support the development and promotion of the Fair Work employer support tool to help employers to adopt fairer working practices, and to promote the Scottish Business Pledge. I also ask that you continue to contribute to development of a monitoring framework for measuring the impact of Fair Work First.

National Projects

16. Finally, I want to acknowledge the work that HIE has been undertaking to support delivery of key projects which are of national importance - specifically work in relation to Cairngorm, Nigg and the development of Space Hub Sutherland. I am grateful to HIE for the work that is being carried out to develop viable solutions which ensure that the economic opportunities at a regional and national level are maximised and that value for money is achieved.

Conclusion

17. In conclusion, I hope that you will find this letter helpful in providing guidance for the remainder of 2020-21.

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ANNEX B

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT POLICIES WITH SPECIFIC RELEVANCE TO THE ENTERPRISE AGENCIES

Programme for Government

Published on 1 September 2020, the [Scottish Government's Programme for Government](#) sets out the Government's actions for the next year including the Bills that will be introduced to the Scottish Parliament.

Scotland's Economic Strategy

The twin pillars of boosting competitiveness and tackling inequality in [Scotland's Economic Strategy](#), which was published in 2015, remain core to our economic approach, as does the focus on investment, internationalisation, innovation and inclusive growth in supporting business and continuing to grow Scotland's economy.

Economic Recovery Implementation Plan

The [Scottish Government's response to the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery](#) set out priorities and commitments for Scotland's recovery from the economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 crisis. The implementation plan focuses on measures that can be taken to ensure a sustainable and just economic recovery – restarting Scotland's economic activity and prosperity whilst restating the commitment to strategic objectives including a wellbeing economy, fair work principles and a just transition to a net zero economy.

Addressing the Labour Market Emergency

In July 2020 the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board published its recommendations for mitigating the labour market impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. The Scottish Government set out its response in [Addressing the Labour Market Emergency](#).

Economic Action Plan

The [Economic Action Plan 2019-2020](#) is at the heart of what this Government is doing to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It is part of the commitment to deliver growth in a way that enhances the quality of life for all of our citizens and which is compatible with achieving net-zero emissions by 2045. Doing so will enable Scotland to create a distinct growth model that is equitable and sustainable from the outset.

National Performance Framework (NPF)

Introduced in 2007 and refreshed in 2011, 2016 and 2018, the [NPF](#) sets out in the Purpose and the National Outcomes, a clear, unified vision for Scotland and how our actions will improve the quality of life for the people of Scotland.

Transforming Public Services – Supporting Growth

[The Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) includes provisions to strengthen community planning. The Act, places new statutory duties on Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) and public sector bodies - including the enterprise agency for the CPPs in its region - to improve outcomes and reduce socio-economic disadvantage for local communities (including the business community) through effective partnership working.

Fairer Scotland Duty (Interim) Guidance

This [guidance](#) places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic

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disadvantage. The final guidance will be developed with public bodies, grounded on experience of working on the Duty and reflecting the good practice that's already in place.

The Scottish Government has funded the Improvement Service to provide advice and training for public bodies on the new Duty going forward. If you would like to know more, please contact the Programme Manager, Transformation, Performance and Improvement at info@improvementservice.org.uk.

Scotland's international policy statement 2017

This [policy statement](#) builds on the four strategic objectives outlined in Scotland's International Framework.

Scottish Government's policy response to Brexit and subsequent analysis

The Scottish Government's policy response to Brexit and subsequent analysis is available at <https://www.gov.scot/brexit/>.

International Trade and Investment

[A Trading Nation](#), published in May 2019, sets out the priority countries, sectors and businesses which the enterprise agencies should focus on and the actions which should be taken to increase Scotland's exports as a percentage of GDP and to reach our ambitious target of 25% by 2029.

[The Inward Investment Plan \(IIP\)](#), published in October 2020, sets out our ambition for Scotland as a leading destination for inward investment aligned with our values as a nation. The plan articulates the important role inward investment can play in Scotland's economic recovery by delivering high-value jobs to the economy.

There will be maintenance and expansion of the current capital investment portfolios of projects which includes the published [Green Investment Portfolio](#). There will also be active engagement with developer and investor communities as well as planning and representing Scotland at major relevant international trade fairs such as MIPIM and EXPO Real.

Delivery against the capital investment attraction agenda will include the development of a Capital Investment Plan (CIP) and will set out the rationale and evidence for actions that position capital investment's key role in our economic recovery. It will also support our objective of delivering future ambitions around Net Zero, place making and in Scotland's key international opportunity areas.

Understanding the Scottish rural economy: research paper

This [report](#) outlines the Scottish Government's understanding of the Scottish rural economy and presents economic and social data.

Scotland CAN DO: an innovation action plan for Scotland

This [innovation action plan](#) builds on the progress we have made, working together, to boost Scotland's innovation performance. The enterprise agencies should continue to engage with Scottish Government and partners to evaluate the success and impact of the [CAN DO approach](#) and to support development and delivery of a refreshed common framework and statement of intent, identifying priority areas of action to support entrepreneurship in Scotland and to ensure that the power of [entrepreneurship](#) can be harnessed to support delivery of wider social and economic aims, driving sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

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Promoting Fair Work

The SG has been clear that Scotland's economic recovery and longer term plan for sustainable and inclusive growth must be driven by innovation and increased productivity, and the relationship between employers and workers should be right at the heart of this. The [Fair Work Action Plan](#) sets out the strategic approach being taken across the Scottish Government and with key partners to embed fair work within businesses across Scotland. Fair Work First guidance will be published in the coming weeks and will be available at [Fair Work First](#). The Fair Work policy team will update the enterprise agencies when the guidance is published.

National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS)

Establishing the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland, which will be hosted by the University of Strathclyde, is a key investment being made by the Scottish Government to place Scotland at the forefront of advanced manufacturing. NMIS will be delivered through Scottish Enterprise who will also ensure that the services offered by the Institute are joined up with the wider Enterprise Support landscape.

[National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland: statement of intent](#)

Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund

The Scottish Government established an [Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund](#) to support the equipment and facilities needed to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Scotland improve their manufacturing capabilities, and spread the reach and benefits of advanced manufacturing. Scottish Enterprise operate as lead partners for fund implementation and ongoing management supported by the wider Enterprise Support landscape.

Making Scotland's Future

The Scottish Government, in conjunction with industry and key public sector partners including Scottish Enterprise, has developed an integrated programme of support for the manufacturing sector called Making Scotland's Future. Scottish Enterprise led four of the work streams programs and contribute to Board discussions and join up with the wider Enterprise Support Landscape.

Low Carbon Manufacturing Challenge Fund

The Scottish Government will establish a Low Carbon Manufacturing Challenge Fund to support innovation in low carbon technology, processes and infrastructure. It will be designed to build on Scotland's existing expertise, encouraging partnerships to come forward with bids that will encourage the adoption or development of low carbon technologies or processes. We want to reinforce Scotland's status as a leading exponent of efficient and sustainable manufacturing practices. We also want to better enable firms to enter low carbon markets and/or their existing supply chains. We would expect all the enterprise agencies to contribute the Fund's development, and to support its delivery once it is established.

The future of energy in Scotland: Scottish energy strategy

Scotland's [energy strategy](#) sets out the Scottish Government's vision for the future energy system in Scotland.

Support for Veterans and the Armed Forces community

This [document](#) sets out the work that is being done to respond to the recommendations made in the Scottish Veterans Commissioner's first three reports.

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Realising Scotland's full potential in a digital world: a digital strategy for Scotland

Scotland's refreshed [digital strategy](#) sets out our vision for Scotland as a vibrant, inclusive, open and outward looking digital nation. As we reflect on the response, recovery and renew and in particular the considerable contribution digital has made to date we are undertaking a [consultation](#) on the digital strategy with a view to update in 2021. All bodies should be aware of the Scottish Government [Technology Assurance Framework](#), which is mandatory and applies to new digital public services and new investments in technology. Please contact digitalassurance@gov.scot if you would like to discuss the application of technology assurance within your organisation.

Scotland's Tourism Strategy and Tourism Taskforce Report

[Scotland's tourism strategy, Scotland Outlook: 2030](#), was launched in March 2020. It reflects a collaborative and inclusive approach across agencies and the industry. The strategy represents a new approach putting our communities, our people, our visitors, our businesses and our environment at the heart of everything we do. This strategy remains the overall context for our support for the tourism industry. However, within this context, the [Tourism Recovery Taskforce](#) report, due to be published imminently, will set out recommendations for consideration by the Scottish and UK Governments to respond to the devastating impact of the COVID pandemic on the tourism sector.

Scotland's Themed Years

[Themed Years](#) have been running since 2009 as a way to celebrate a particular side to Scotland that deserves recognition. Following an industry consultation in 2016, Themed Years now take place biennially. In 2020 we are celebrating the Year of Scotland's Coasts and Waters, and in light of the impact of COVID-19 this Themed Year will be extended across 2021. The next Themed Year in plan will be Scotland's Stories in 2022.

Scotland's Social Enterprise Strategy and Action Plan

[Scotland's Social Enterprise Strategy 2016-2026](#) and [Action Plan](#) outline collaborative work with the enterprise agencies, specifically actions 2B.2, 2B.3 and 2B.5.

New blueprint for Scotland's rural economy: recommendations to Scottish Ministers

[The National Council of Rural Advisers report](#) detailing their final recommendations to Scottish Ministers on Scotland's rural economy.

Rural Economy Action Group

[The Rural Economy Action Group](#), one of the NCRA's recommendations, will guide how Scottish Ministers drive forward recommendations of a report by the National Council of Rural Advisers (NCRA).

Creative Industries Policy Statement

Recognising the value of the creative economy to place, inclusive growth, well-being and Scotland's international profile, the enterprise agencies are expected to work constructively with Creative Scotland and other partners to realise the vision and priorities in our [Policy Statement for the Creative Industries](#).

Screen Scotland

The enterprise agencies are expected to play a full part in Screen Scotland's governance and contribute actively to the work to fulfil our shared ambition of stronger collaborative working and effective delivery of public sector resources to drive inclusive growth and sustainability in Scotland's film and television sectors.

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Scottish Growth Scheme

The enterprise agencies' contribution to the delivery of the Scottish Growth Scheme is extremely important, not just in securing success for the aspects that SE directly has responsibility but ensuring that the wider services available under the Scottish Growth Scheme are readily promoted to potential eligible businesses, working in partnership with the appointed Fund Managers.

Ambition 2030 Food & Drink Industry Strategy

The [strategy](#), which was launched in 2017, sets out targets, supported by the industry and public sector alike, to grow the value of the sector to £30bn by 2030. The new phase of delivery, taking account of Brexit and COVID-19 on which we are working in partnership with the Food & Drink Industry, will be launched as an initial sectoral recovery plan (to be published late 2020). The plan seeks to bolster and accelerate the current core work of the Scotland Food & Drink Partnership in delivering Ambition 2030 and will allow for more resilience to be built into the sector, as well as representing an opportunity for renewal. We expect the enterprise agencies and SDI to play an enhanced role in supporting the growth and resilience of businesses in the food and drink sector as part of this work, including sustaining and enhancing investment for bespoke programmes and projects.

Life Sciences Strategy for Scotland 2025 Vision

The [Strategy](#) was published in February 2017. Its vision is to make Scotland the location of choice for the life sciences community and its mission is to increase the industry's contribution to the Scottish Economy to £8bn by 2025. All agencies will have a continued important role working in collaboration with industry, NHS, Government and academia to deliver the key recovery actions for the sector with a clear focus on growth opportunities and continued support of the Life Sciences Industry Leadership Group, Life Sciences Scotland, to develop and deliver the Strategy. The importance of the sector COVID-19 response was highlighted by Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation during the [Parliamentary Statement](#) and in the accompanying publication in August 2020.

Women in enterprise: framework and action plan

The 2017 [Women in enterprise: framework and action plan](#) seeks to realise untapped economic potential by tackling the gender gap across start-ups and growth companies. The Scottish Government is committed to bringing forward a model to deliver future gender-aware and gender-specific policies and interventions regardless of location or stage on their entrepreneurial journey. This will follow a robust, evidence based approach. Enterprise agencies' support will be central to delivering a new model of support for women in enterprise in Scotland.

Clyde Mission

The purpose of the Clyde Mission is to make the Clyde an engine of sustainable and inclusive growth for the city, the region and Scotland. The Mission brings together public and private sector partners, including Scottish Enterprise, to harness the opportunities and competitive advantage of the River Clyde and the surrounding assets to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Incorporation

On 1 September 2020 the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) was introduced to the Scottish Parliament. The Bill will ensure that there is a proactive culture of everyday accountability for children's rights across public services in Scotland. The Bill will mean that children, young people and their families will experience public authorities consistently acting to uphold the rights of all children in Scotland.

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Part 1 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places a duty on Ministers to keep under consideration steps which would or might secure better or further effect the UNCRC, raise awareness of children's rights, and report to Parliament every 3 years on relevant progress and plans for the next 3 year period. The first Report and Action Plan were laid before Parliament in December 2018. A report on progress made in taking forward the Action Plan was published in November 2019.

Young Workforce

The enterprise agencies have a vital role to play in working with the Scottish Government to implement its youth employment strategy, Developing the Young Workforce, for example, by recruiting and training young people, working towards achieving the Investors in Young People gold standard and engaging with the education system to provide development opportunities for young people. Although through implementation of procurement policies that encourage more employers to contribute to the development of Scotland's young people.

Low Carbon sector and combating climate change

Our public bodies are at the frontline of Scotland's climate emergency response. We are committed to working closely with local government and the wider public sector to facilitate high ambition in tackling the global climate emergency. We look to all public bodies to help realise the significant opportunity for growing the **low carbon sector** both through leadership and directly through reduction of energy demand and integration of low carbon and renewable heat and energy technologies across estates.

More generally, we expect our public bodies to lead by example in **combating the climate emergency** and making a valuable contribution towards achieving our ambitious emissions reduction targets of 75% by 2030 and net zero emissions nationally by 2045.

2020/2021 will mark the sixth year of mandatory reporting from 180 listed public bodies on compliance with climate change duties. The mandatory reports for 2020/2021 are due to be submitted to the Scottish Government by 30 Nov 2021. Public Bodies climate change reporting duties requirement under [sections 46 of the Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#).

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

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