

**CONVENTION OF THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS – 27 OCTOBER 2014
OUTCOMES**

PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM

COHI members agreed to review how their CPPs continued to lead reform of public services around the needs and perspectives of local communities at the Autumn 2015 Convention.

This should take stock of ongoing progress on:

- How CPPs were capitalising on the expertise, commitment and resources of all of their public sector partner bodies, the third sector and local communities in order to shape priorities and achieve better outcomes (with particular focus around the themes of economic development and employment, health and wellbeing, the contribution of the natural environment and community justice);
- What impact CPPs were making, in terms of better outcomes for their communities and reduced inequalities; and
- How CPPs were using data and other evidence to ensure their efforts on prevention and tackling inequalities are focused and effective.

SKILLS INVESTMENT PLAN FOR THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS

COHI members agreed that the SIP was a key economic lever and that a key challenge would be around how to actively engage employers in the development of skills and employability provision across FE, HE and wider provision. COHI agreed:

- that the key local issues around North Ayrshire and Argyll and Bute raised during the discussions would be included within the SIP document.
- how the local Skills Action Plans would be developed and taken forward in the context of the work of CPPs and to develop terms of reference for the Implementation Review Group.
- that a would be brought back to COHI in 12 month outlining progress against the implementation of the themed actions.
- that Cllr Gary Robinson, Shetland Council should meet with the Cabinet Secretary for Training, Youth and Women's Employment and with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning to discuss potential competing policy objectives.

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TOURISM

COHI members welcomed the opportunity to engage with North Ayrshire Council who were hosting a key Marine Tourism Conference in Arran in March 2015 (with Danish linkages) and recognised the emerging European Commission interest on strengthening tourism by leveraging Europe's cultural, natural and maritime heritage.

COHI members recognised the need to work with the industry to improve the quality of employment opportunities in Tourism and the importance of seeking opportunities to extend season which could help in boosting the quality of employment. Opportunities could include business tourism (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events), making more of accessible tourism, as well as tapping into wider markets.

VisitScotland would continue to share its work on accessible tourism and highlight current availability of both access statements and on-line customer service training, which were Commonwealth Games legacy programmes.

COHI members agreed it was important to boost the perception of careers within tourism and hospitality especially amongst younger people. The SG agreed to share information on the South East Scotland Academies Partnership.

COHI members agreed to work with industry to continue to highlight opportunities for investment from the public, private and third sector which the VisitScotland Tourism Development Framework for Scotland had helped to reveal and which was already to Scottish Planning Policy, including the National Planning Framework 3.

COHI members agreed to work together with VisitScotland and other public bodies to encourage early alignment and involvement with all of the Themed Years, running from 2015 (Year of Food and Drink) through to 2018 (Year of Young People).

RURAL PARLIAMENT

COHI members were interested to hear about the outcomes from rural parliament at its Spring 2015 Convention and would consider the implications for COHI's future agenda items.

COHI members would consider individually how to respond to the substance of the Rural Parliament recommendations.

COHI members recognised that attention would be given to not only the Rural Parliament itself but also to the wider rural movement, combining new ways of doing business with building on existing heritage of democratic decision-making around rural Scotland.

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SMITH COMMISSION

COHI members noted the work of the Smith Commission which had been established to take forward the devolution commitments on further powers for the Scottish Parliament and agreed that there should be a substantive discussion of the implications of the recommendations of the Commission at the Spring 2015 COHI.

COHI members would make individual representations to the Commission but felt that there could be potential to explore a joint representation about the Crown Estate emphasising the importance of the local control and decision making.

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