

## **Council for Economic Renewal**

### **Paper from the Executive Working Group**

#### **Purpose**

1. To provide an update to the Council for Economic Renewal on the work of the Executive Working Group and to set out some future proposals.

#### **Action**

2. The Council for Economic Renewal is asked to agree the recommendations of this Paper.

#### **Background**

3. At its meeting in June 2014, the Council agreed a paper on future ways of working. One of the recommendations was for a reconstituted Working Group, with changes to membership as well as its role and communication with the wider Council Members.
4. Following this agreement, a new Executive Working Group was formed to support the Council. The full terms of reference are at Appendix 1.
5. Its main objective was set out as supporting the Council for Economic Renewal's objective of improving the Welsh economy, by working together to identify proposals to support economic development; considering the activities of all Welsh Government bodies that engage with social partners; reviewing progress against the Economic Framework; establishing task and finish groups as appropriate; recommending items for inclusion on the agendas of the CfER and taking forward subsequent actions.
6. The Working Group was to meet four times a year, with the option to meet more often on specific issues as necessary. The membership comprised Welsh Government representatives, three representatives from Commerce Cymru and three representatives from Wales TUC. In the first year of operation, the Wales TUC would offer one of its seats to the Wales Co-operative Centre to allow the social enterprise perspective to be encompassed within discussions. The operation of the Executive Working Group was to be reviewed after a year to determine the extent to which it has been able to fulfil its Terms of Reference.

#### **Progress**

7. The first meeting of the new Executive Working Group was held on the 25 November 2014. Since that time, the Executive Working Group has met on six occasions. The Executive Working Group has discussed
  - a) Procurement
  - b) The Welsh Government's Economic Framework
  - c) Skills
  - d) Tackling Poverty
  - e) Better Regulation
  - f) European Structural Funds

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- g) Business Wales
  - h) The UK Government's Budget
  - i) The Wales TUC campaign 'Better Jobs, Closer to Home'
  - j) City Regions
  - k) The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
  - l) Economic Growth
  - m) The Living Wage
8. Of the subjects covered, in-depth consideration has been given to Procurement and the associated area of Tackling Poverty.

### Review

9. The Terms of Reference set out that the operation of the Executive Working Group should be reviewed after one year. It is now time to conduct that review, which will be an agenda item at the next Executive Working Group. However, comments are welcomed from Members of the Council to feed in to that review on how the Council is operating and any more that the Executive Working Group could or should be doing to assist its work. A paper on the review of the Working Group will be a Paper to Note at the next Council meeting.

### Forward Look

10. As the next Council meeting will be after the National Assembly for Wales elections in May, the Executive Working Group felt strongly that there should be an early Council meeting in the new Government term to discuss the Welsh economy and the future strategic direction. It was felt that a date should be secured for this now. It was also felt that an early Council meeting would provide an opportunity for the Council to set out how it can work with the Government going forward.

### Recommendations

#### For Council Consideration

The Council is asked to agree the following recommendations:

- A. That Council Members be invited to feed in their views on the operation of the Executive Working Group as part of its review process.**
- B. That a date for the Council to meet early in to the new Government term be agreed now.**
- C. That the above meeting is used as an opportunity to discuss the Welsh economy and the future strategic direction and for the Council to set out how it can work with the Government going forward.**

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### **Appendix 1**

#### **Terms of Reference for the Council for Economic Renewal's Executive Working Group**

##### **Purpose**

To support the Council for Economic Renewal's objective of improving the Welsh economy. In particular:

- To work together to identify proposals to support economic development.
- To consider the activities of all Welsh Government bodies that engage with social partners to ensure that policies adopted by the Welsh Government are consistent with an all-government approach to improving the economy. Appropriate Ministers to be informed, and the scope of any work set out, before reviews of activities within their portfolio responsibilities are considered.
- To review progress against the Economic Framework.
- To establish task and finish groups as and when appropriate.
- To recommend items for inclusion on the agendas of the CfER.
- To take forward actions agreed at Council for Economic Renewal (CfER).
- To advise on and inform the operation of the Business Scheme.
- To communicate the work of the CfER and its Executive Working Group to the social partners as defined in the Business Scheme.

##### **Title**

CfER Executive Working Group.

##### **Membership**

- Welsh Government representatives
- Three representatives from Commerce Cymru
- Three representatives from Wales TUC.

In the first year of operation the Wales TUC will offer one of its seats to the Wales Co-operative Centre to allow the social enterprise perspective to be encompassed within discussions. The membership will be reviewed after one year to determine whether the social enterprise sector should have one representative by right in addition to the three representatives from Commerce Cymru and the three Wales TUC representatives.

##### **Frequency**

Four times a year. Option to meet more often on specific issues as necessary.

##### **Operations of meetings**

Arrangements and papers circulated by the Welsh Government/Wales Social Partners Unit.

##### **Review**

The operation of the CfER Executive Working Group will be reviewed after a year to determine the extent to which it has been able to fulfil its Terms of Reference.