



National Skills Council

MINUTES OF MEETING OF NATIONAL SKILLS COUNCIL

16 July 2018

Chair:

Mr. Richard Bruton, TD, Minister for Education and Skills.

Council members present:

Dr. Graham Love, HEA, Dr. Pádraig Walsh, Quality and Qualifications Ireland; Prof. Mark Ferguson, Science Foundation Ireland; Ms. Nessa Doyle, ETBI; Mr. Paul O'Toole, SOLAS; Mr. Seán Ó Foghlú, Department of Education and Skills; Mr. Martin McVicar, Combilift; Prof Aidan Mulkeen, Mr Liam Ryan, SAP; Mr. James Magill, Vodafone.

In attendance:

Mr. Tony Donohue, EGFSN and IBEC; Ms. Kathleen Gavin, Department of Education and Skills; Mr. Phil O'Flaherty, Department of Education and Skills, Mr. Gavan O'Leary, Department of Education and Skills, Mr. David Hegarty, DBEI, Mr. Alan Power, Mr. Kevin Daly. Mr. Mark Christal, Enterprise Ireland; Mr. Terry Corcoran, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection; Vodafone; Ms. Marie Mulvihill, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform; Mr. Ray Bowe, IDA;

Apologies:

Mr. John McKeon, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Dr Orlaigh Quinn, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Mr Martin Shanahan, IDA, Mr Pat Rigney, Fastnet Brands, Ms. Julie Sinnamon, Enterprise Ireland; Mr. David Moloney, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Prof Brian Norton,.

1. Welcome and minutes of previous meeting:

The Minister opened the meeting and minutes of the previous meeting were agreed

Agenda item	Key points discussed	Action
1. Welcome and minutes of previous meeting.	Minister Bruton welcomed Ms. Nessa Doyle (new General Secretary of ETBI) to the Council.	
2. Information Item: Presentation of Paper on Productivity and Competitiveness	<p>A presentation was given by DBEI and Mr. Peter Clinch, Chair of the National Competitiveness Council.</p> <p>The Presentation outlined that Productivity is a key driver of improvements in living standards and the ultimate engine of long run economic growth and Irish productivity has already caught up with the rest of advanced economies. However, Ireland's productivity is built upon a narrow base of mainly foreign-owned sectors, and in some of these sectors, a small group of firms.</p> <p>It was noted that, looking ahead, automation has the potential for productivity gains but will have skills implications.</p> <p>The presentation underlined the challenges of maintaining economic progress and called for urgent focus on, building higher living standards by transforming our productivity performance. It also highlighted the need to develop management capability to reposition underperforming enterprises and to cultivate innovation.</p>	Discussion on this item was combined with discussion on Item 3.

<p>3. Strategic Discussion:</p> <p>The Future World of Work</p>	<p>The Presentation outlined that digitally enabled automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will be the primary drivers of the next technological revolution and are likely to reshape the workplace. The pace of change is faster than seen in previous technological disruptions.</p> <p>Given the current trajectory and potential from automation and AI, it is likely that Ireland will need to rebalance its skills mix towards the most in demand skills (e.g. advanced cognitive and social and emotional skills). The ability of Ireland to rebalance this skills mix will affect the productivity gains potential of automation and AI.</p> <p>The skills balance required will be different across sectors, and some sectors will be more impacted by automation than others, e.g. manufacturing, construction. There will also be a lag between the displacement of jobs and uplift from increased productivity.</p> <p>The transition will need to be actively managed and government, individuals and the private sector will all have a role in reskilling.</p> <p>The presentation identified many areas where we need to act immediately, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the development of the competences that create value in a digitally enhanced world at every level of Education and Training. • Develop the supporting environment for a world where more enterprises are born and die where individuals can plan their employability in changing jobs. 	<p>Discussion focused on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifelong learning • The broad focus of the current education programme • Improving productivity of SMEs • Potential solutions for SMEs • Successfully managing the transition – including displacement of workers, income distribution and Ireland’s role within an international setting of increased adoption of Automation and AI • Policy and tax incentives <p>A paper will be circulated to enable further contributions on the issue</p>
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4. Outcomes from the NSC April discussion on Strategic Theme of National Training Fund (including discussion of NTF and Vote priorities for 2019)	<p>The outcomes paper from the NSC April discussion was presented to the Council for approval.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion on the need to effectively communicate what the NTF funds and the importance of evaluating the outcomes of provision. SOLAS updated the group on work underway to establish baseline data. It was agreed that access to administrative data was important</p>	<p>The paper was approved.</p> <p>DES to discuss data access with CSO.</p>
5. Information Item: Updates via Dashboard ICT Action Plan	<p>General updates were provided on the following:</p> <p>Dashboard of metrics, including Springboard+ 2018, CAO applications, Traineeships/Apprenticeships; Skills for Growth/Spotlight on Skills</p> <p>ICT Action Plan</p> <p>EGFSN Workplan 2018</p> <p>The Career Guidance Review (now underway with Indecon).</p> <p>Employee Development Framework</p>	<p>Dashboard will be further updated for next meeting</p> <p>Further update on Career Guidance Review to be provided for next meeting</p>
6. Publications for Approval	The Council was asked to approve publication of the "Lifelong Learning Report"	Publication of the report was approved by the Council.
8. AOB and closing remarks		Next meeting 5th November 2018