

Follow up from Skills Development Scotland

Thank you for inviting Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to give evidence to the Economy and Fair Work Committee on the Just Transition in the North East and Moray. During the evidence session on 15 November, we offered to follow up on several areas.

Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (CESAP)

SDS facilitated the development of the CESAP with Scottish Government and key partners. This was published in December 2020 to coincide with the Climate Change Update and its delivery was supported by the introduction of an Implementation Steering Group (ISG) of key stakeholders chaired by Professor Dave Reay at the University of Edinburgh.

In July 2022, Scottish Government took responsibility for updating the CESAP in-house with an initial aim to provide an updated CESAP by the end of 2023. The Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity confirmed on 19th December 2023 that “the Scottish Government intends to fully align green skills policy and planning behind its wider net zero priorities and will therefore integrate the next phase of the work on green skills into the Just Transition Plans, Green Industrial Strategy and Rural Delivery Plan, rather than through a separate CESAP update”. This work will continue to be progressed through the ISG.

A draft progress report, focusing primarily on SDS activity, was shared with Scottish Government in October 2023 for comment, input and confirmation of next steps, SG is yet to conclude this work.

A key piece of work taken forward from the CESAP is highlighted below.

CESAP Pathfinder

The [Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan 2020-2025](#) (CESAP) outlined the need for action to ensure that current and future skills investment in support of net zero is **strongly evidence based**. This includes:

- Strengthening the evidence base on current and future **demand for skills** for net zero, and articulating these to the skills system.
- Understanding current **skills provision** to support the transition to net zero across education, training and work-based learning.
- Understanding the **supply of people** with skills, and creating upskilling and reskilling opportunities.
- Taking a **highly collaborative approach** to ensuring that the skills system is responsive to changing demands.

As part of work under the Shared Outcomes Framework (SOF) which was jointly agreed by SDS, SG and SFC, SDS led work to develop a [CESAP Pathfinder](#) project, which directly responded to this need. It has two complementary work packages:

- **Work Package 1: An Evidence Based Approach to Supporting the Transition to Net Zero.**
This takes a comprehensive and systemic approach to understanding both the demand for skills across the key sectors of importance to the transition to net zero and the current (and ongoing) investment in skills provision across FE/HE and work-based learning to meet the identified need. This approach looks to provide an evidence base to allow for the development of a skills response, identify any gaps and highlight appropriate areas of current and future focus.

- **Work Package 2: Decarbonisation of Domestic and Commercial Heating Pilot.**

This focuses on the decarbonisation of domestic and commercial heating, chosen as it is one of the early investment programmes being delivered as part of the SG Climate Change Plan. This work package is a pilot test of change. Following both a desk based review and engagement with stakeholders including industry and local partners, and SG policy leads, Glasgow City Region and the Shetland Islands were identified as areas for potential pilots.

The Pathfinder work will conclude in April 2024 but to date has published:

- [Full report](#) - a comprehensive overview of the full range of activity that constituted the Pathfinder, identification of gaps and opportunities for further action.
- [Executive summary](#) - a short summation of the CESAP Pathfinder report and the gaps and opportunities identified.
- Preces reports on the key evidence [investment](#), [demand](#) and [provision](#) – succinct, accessible documents which provide the background to the work, summarise the main findings and identify key lessons learnt.

The findings have been shared and disseminated with a range of partners and stakeholders. Each of these reports is attached here for ease of access. The work is also supporting the work of the Energy Just Transition Plan.

The focused work in Glasgow City Region and the Shetland Islands around heat decarbonisation is approaching completion. This work has involved engagement with regional and skills partners, mapping planned investment, a high-level analysis of job demand, an analysis of skills provision, the identification of gaps and skills issues and co-design work with regional partners and skills providers to respond. Outputs from CESAP Work Package 2 will be published through the Shared Outcomes Assurance Group in due course.

Skills Passport

We have followed up with OPITO as well as the Just Transition team within Scottish Government, and understand work is still ongoing to make progress towards a functional Skills Passport. The Scottish Government Just Transition team will be best placed to answer any specific questions.

STEM Equalities

Women remain under-represented across the majority of STEM sectors, in areas such as manufacturing and construction apprenticeships. The Scottish Government are working to challenge gender stereotypes by providing funding to enable Education Scotland to develop a range of professional learning resources, highlighting the impact of inequality, bias and challenging well-established gender stereotypes. Education Scotland and its successor will take an evidence-based approach to targeting their activity and as long as there are gender disparities in STEM subjects these will be a part of that work.

I hope this update is helpful. We would be happy to meet with Committee members to discuss the points raised in this letter.