

MINUTES

20th January 2010

PRESENT 20th JANUARY: SEE ATTACHED LIST (ANNEX 1).
APOLOGIES 20th JANUARY: Norman Black, Claire Gilligan, John D'Arcy, Donald Fitzmaurice.

Chair welcomed the Panel to the MATRIX discussion on skills and invited Bill McGinnis to expand on his role as Northern Ireland Advisor on Employment and Skills (NIAES).

1. PRESENTATION ON THE ROLE OF THE NI ADVISER ON EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS.

Bill McGinnis thanked the Chair and explained that his role is to reflect the needs of employers into the Government's skills and employment strategies via the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL). Bill invited Deirdre McGill, the DEL Secretariat to NIAES, to present to the Panel on the role of the NIAES and its alignment with the MATRIX.

The Panel discussed whether the skills need in Northern Ireland was a supply or a demand issue. The Panel felt it was important to pull together all relevant data from a number of sources and use these as an evidence base. The Panel also felt it was important not to create programmes of support but to rationalise those that exist from Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI) and the DEL.

The Panel discussed the recent meeting with the Northern Ireland Science Education Forum (NISEF) and its liaison with the Council for the Curriculum Examinations & Assessment (CCEA) in relation to education – business links. The Panel agreed that there needed to be further examination of these links and how these could be better coordinated and delivered. It was agreed while MATRIX has a role as a stakeholder and facilitator, it may be more appropriate for Bill McGinnis' Advisory Group to advise on how the issue should be taken forward. It was noted that DEL/NIAES had already looked at this issue and it had been discussed that a task group be set up to determine how the business recommendations in the review of STEM could be taken forward.

Action Point 1: Bill McGinnis to explore the role his post could bring to developing the links between education and business.

The Chair thanked Deirdre McGill and Bill McGinnis for their overview of the NIAES and then invited Michael Gould (DEL) to present on DEL's approach to skills alignment with the MATRIX report recommendations.

2. PRESENTATION ON DEL'S APPROACH TO SKILLS ALIGNMENT WITH THE MATRIX REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS.

Michael Gould gave an overview of current activities including the North Carolina model used to develop Industry-led Innovation Communities in this state. The model, which was developed by Martin Lancaster and Susan Seymour has been considered as a possible pilot in Northern Ireland. A draft report commissioned by DEL from Martin Lancaster, is due January 2010, with the final report due in March 2010.

Michael extended an invitation to the Panel to visit the Further Education colleges. It was agreed that it might be useful for MATRIX to meet with Martin Lancaster for further discussions.

The Panel was informed that an interim report on a Skills Strategy for the Minister was due at the end of January 2010 and the Final Report was due in June 2010.

Action Point 2: DEL to explore the opportunity for Martin Lancaster and Susan Seymour to meet with the MATRIX Panel when next in Northern Ireland.

The Chair and Panel thanked Michael Gould.

Discussion ends.

MATRIX 2 DISCUSSION
THE NORTHERN IRELAND SCIENCE INDUSTRY PANEL
WEDNESDAY 20th JANUARY 2010

ATTENDEES

Organisation

Damien McDonnell	Chair
Norman Apsley	NISP
Colin Elliott	Bombardier Aerospace
Rob Hardeman	Seagate Technology
Alan Lennon	Invest NI Board Representative
Brian Keating	Invest NI Board Representative
Gerry McCormac	Queen's University Belfast
Bill McGinnis	NI Skills Adviser on Skills and Employment
Clare Passmore	Industry rep / Independent Consultant
Niall Casey	Invest NI
Fiona Hepper	DETI
Carol Keery	Invest NI
John Noble	DEL
Michael Gould	DEL
Deirdre McGill	NIAES
Anne Conaty	MATRIX Secretariat
Conor Dunbar	MATRIX Secretariat
Laura Parkhill	MATRIX Secretariat (Minutes)

MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE THIRD PLENARY MEETING OF THE MATRIX 2 PANEL.

21st January 2010

PRESENT 21st JANUARY: SEE ATTACHED LIST (ANNEX 2).

APOLOGIES 21st JANUARY: Donald Fitzmaurice.

1. MINISTER'S OPENING REMARKS AND CHAIR'S WELCOME.

The Acting First Minister and Minister of DETI, Arlene Foster opened the plenary and thanked the Chair and Panel for their contribution and time. The Minister advised the Panel that government was in the process of implementing the recommendations outlined in the Government Response to the MATRIX report, which was launched in November 2009. Looking forward the Minister identified the areas of Industry-led Innovation Communities and the new Horizon Panels in Telecommunications and Clean Energy as the main challenges for the new MATRIX Panel.

The Chair thanked the Minister on behalf of all the Panel members, welcoming that government had fully taken on board the MATRIX' recommendations and was implementing them through the Government Implementation Group and also thanked her for her continued support.

(Minister leaves)

The Chair welcomed David Thomson in his new post within DETI and in his role as Chair of the Government Implementation Group (GIG).

(David Thomson leaves)

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

The minutes of the previous MATRIX meeting were agreed without change.

3. MATTERS ARISING.

The Secretariat addressed the action points arising from the 12 November meeting and updated the Panel on their implementation. All had been addressed or were in the process of being addressed and were tabled for discussion later in the meeting.

It was noted that a meeting requested by the Northern Ireland Science Education Forum (NISEF), as raised under AOB at the last plenary, had been on held on the morning of 19th January. It was suggested that Bill McGinnis would lead in taking forward the actions arising from this.

Panel members were reminded that if they wished to nominate Strategic Advisers forward names to the Secretariat, for consideration by the department.

The issue of establishing a physical register of interest was raised. Secretariat to take forward and determine if this was appropriate for a Panel which has a purely advisory role.

Action Point 1: Secretariat to ascertain if the establishment of a Physical Register of Interest for MATRIX Panel members is appropriate.

4. UPDATE ON TELECOMMS HORIZON PANEL.

Bryan Keating, the Chair of the Telecomms Panel updated the MATRIX Panel on the study into the opportunities arising from Northern Ireland Telecomms infrastructure, in particular the direct international connectivity (i.e. Project Kelvin). Work has begun and will be finished by the end of April 2010. PA Consultancy have been appointed to support the work of the Telecomms group. The “Monetizing Kelvin” event at the Northern Ireland Science Park was commended by the Panel. The Chair of the Telecomms Panel thanked the Science Park, Telecomms Policy Unit and the MATRIX Panel for their help in making this event so successful.

The impact on Telecomms by Clean Energy costs was discussed. Bryan Keating informed the Panel that this will be examined as part of the Horizon Panel’s work.

The Chair added that he had attended the first Project meeting of the DETI Renewable Heat Study and that an overview of the purpose of this work might be beneficial to the Panel.

Action Point 2: Secretariat to circulate information on DETI’s Renewable Heat Study to the Panel.

The possibility of a “Clean Tech” Springboard was discussed by the Panel and it was agreed that names for the Clean Energy Horizon Panel should be forwarded to the Secretariat.

Action Point 3: Panel members to forward names for potential membership of the Clean Energy Horizon Panel to the Secretariat.

The issue of potential duplication of efforts on issues such as Energy across various agencies and departments was raised. The Secretariat reminded the Panel that relevant government observers were brought in to MATRIX meetings, as best practice, to encourage better synergizing of work and to minimize the potential for duplication.

The Panel noted that Invest NI was conducting a scoping study around Project Kelvin in order to identify the potential beneficiaries and interested parties and would feed back to the Panel.

Action Point 4: Invest NI representatives to feedback to the Panel on the results of the scoping study around Project Kelvin.

(Agenda items 5 and 6 switched)

6. MANUFACTURING INNOVATION DESIGN ADVISORY SERVICE (MIDAS).

Alan Blair from the Association of Northern Ireland Colleges (ANIC) gave a presentation to the Panel on the research he had carried out on the issue of embedding design into product development and on the potential to create a Manufacturing Innovation Design Advisory Service (MIDAS). This issue had arisen from the first MATRIX report.

An overview of the current Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) which is supported by BIS and managed by the UK’s Regional Development Agencies (RDA) was given. It was also noted that the Welsh Assembly had left MAS on the basis that it was focused on lean manufacturing support and was not suitable for many SME’s. The Welsh are in the process of developing a model which is more appropriate to the Welsh SME economy. In contrast, Scotland is in the process of adopting MAS and Alan Blair is looking at both approaches in more detail.

A discussion arose on a potential future model of support for Northern Ireland and its possible delivery through the Further Education colleges and the CONNECTed programme.

The Panel agreed any approach in delivering such services must be taken from the

point of view of the customer i.e. SME's. This would be likely to involve streamlining programmes and require a "front door" and signposting.

(Fiona Hepper, Bill Stevenson and Alan Blair leave).

5. UPDATE ON IIC PROJECT TEAM.

Norman Apsley provided an update on the Industry-led Innovation Communities (IIC) sub-panel which had met on 6 January 2010 and had agreed a Terms of Reference and early actions to take these forward. The Panel indicated the need for a legal / corporate adviser to be sought to join the IIC sub-panel.

Action Point 5: Secretariat to forward revised Terms of Reference of the IIC sub-panel to the Panel.

Action Point 6: IIC sub-panel to identify a legal / corporate adviser to join their Panel.

The Panel was informed that the IIC sub-panel and the MATRIX Government Implementation Group will meet to workshop the support for IICs and to develop a template of IIC development. Norman Apsley informed the MATRIX Panel that the IIC sub-panel was keen to widen membership to industry, education and government officials.

7. UPDATE ON GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTATION GROUP.

Bernard McKeown (DETI) gave the Panel an update on the Government Implementation Group (GIG) which met on 16 January. The Panel was advised that 4 Project Teams had been set up to take forward the 4 key actions for government arising from the MATRIX report. The close links to the IIC sub-panel were re-iterated.

External expertise to both groups in taking forward the Business and Government is to be put in place. It was agreed that MATRIX will be kept informed of the work of the GIG and would receive copies of the minutes.

Action Point 7: Secretariat to forward minutes of the Government Implementation Group to the Panel and provide regular updates on the implementation of the 4 government strands.

8. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY.

The Panel was reminded that the contract with the MATRIX PR provider would end

on 31 March 2010 and were asked for their contributions in shaping a new communications strategy going forward. The Secretariat iterated that the Minister is keen for the message of MATRIX to reach all stakeholders. It was suggested that metrics were needed to ascertain how effective past communications to Business have been. The Panel felt that more interaction through existing forums using agreed, consistent strap lines would aid both Business and the Panel to convey key messages.

Action Point 8: Panel members to feedback to the Secretariat regarding MATRIX' Communication Strategy going forward.

9. RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK.

The Panel discussed the proposed changes to how universities will be funded from the current Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) to the proposed Research Excellence Framework (REF). It was suggested that Northern Ireland would probably be less impacted than the rest of Great Britain as the region has a good track record in business / university connectivity.

10. AOB.

i) TSB Operational Advisory Group.

The Chair informed the Panel that Northern Ireland would now be represented nationally at the Operational Advisory Group (OAG) meetings by Invest Northern Ireland. This will complement his role as the Northern Ireland representative on the Technology Strategy Board's (TSB) Strategic Advisory Group.

ii) IP / KT Project Team.

The Chair informed the Panel that there was a need to progress the Intellectual Property / Knowledge Transfer (IP / KT) Project but that this was delayed due to the lack of secretarial resources. He proposed to raise again with Alastair Hamilton to further explore if Invest NI can help with this, in view of the relevance to their programmes.

iii) STEM.

Clare Passmore reminded the Panel that she had been representing MATRIX, with regards to STEM, at the recent DEL and DE Committee meetings respectively and was due to attend one further DEL Committee meeting. The Panel was invited to raise any issues concerning STEM to Clare Passmore for feedback to the

Committee.

iv) Interchange.

Bernard McKeown notified the Panel that there were 2 posts being sought under the Interchange Programme. The posts would be with the MATRIX Secretariat for a period of 12-18 months. It is hoped that filling these posts would help inform government policy from a business perspective. It was agreed that the links to the Interchange advert would be forwarded to the Panel.

Action Point 9: Secretariat to forward details of the Interchange posts to the Panel.

Meeting concluded with Chair thanking the Panel. The date for the next meeting will be 18th March 2010.

Summary of actions arising from discussions of MATRIX 20 January 2010:

Action Point 1: Bill McGinnis to explore the role his post could bring to developing the links between education and business.

Action Point 2: DEL to explore the opportunity for Martin Lancaster and Susan Seymour to meet with the MATRIX Panel when next in Northern Ireland.

Summary of actions arising from Third Plenary of MATRIX 21 January 2010:

Action Point 1: Secretariat to ascertain if the establishment of a Physical Register of Interest for MATRIX Panel members is appropriate.

Action Point 2: Secretariat to circulate information on DETI's Renewable Heat Study to the Panel.

Action Point 3: Panel members to forward names for potential membership of the Clean Tech Horizon Panel to the Secretariat.

Action Point 4: Invest NI representatives to feedback to the Panel on the results of the scoping Study around Project Kelvin.

Action Point 5: Secretariat to forward revised Terms of Reference of the IIC sub-panel to the Panel.

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Action Point 9: Secretariat to forward details of the Interchange posts to the Panel.

THIRD PLENARY MEETING
THE NORTHERN IRELAND SCIENCE INDUSTRY PANEL
THURSDAY 21st JANUARY 2010

ATTENDEES**Organisation**

Damien McDonnell	Chair
Norman Apsley	NISP
Norman Black	University of Ulster
John D'Arcy	ANIC
Colin Elliott	Bombardier Aerospace
Claire Gilligan	Warner Chilcott
Rob Hardeman	Seagate Technologies
Brian Keating	Invest NI Board Representative
Alan Lennon	Invest NI Board Representative
Gerry McCormac	Queen's University Belfast
Bill McGinnis	NI Skills Advisor on Skills and Employment
Clare Passmore	Industry rep / Independent Consultant
David Thomson	DETI
Niall Casey	Invest NI
Fiona Hepper	DETI
Carol Keery	Invest NI
John Noble	DEL
Alan Blair	ANIC
Bernard McKeown	DETI
Bill Stevenson	DETI
Anne Conaty	MATRIX Secretariat
Conor Dunbar	MATRIX Secretariat
Laura Parkhill	MATRIX Secretariat (Minutes)