**MINUTES**

**THURSDAY 14 JUNE 2018**

**Attendees**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Professor Phil Brown | Professor Andrew Westwood |
| Peter Sueref | Professor Tom Crick MBE |
| Tegid Roberts | Carys Roberts |
| Richard Jones | Sophie Howe |
| Kate Carr | Matthew Hicks |
| James Carey | Gail Evans |

**Apologies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Dr Nicole Millard | Marsha Ward |
| Daniel Mines |  |

**Minute**

1. **Chair’s welcome and introductions**
   1. Professor Phil Brown provided an introduction to the review. He talked about the importance of involving social partners and a wider audience of participants as the review moves forward and gathers evidence.
   2. Other points made included:
   * The impact of digital innovation on future government policy and the importance of ensuring such policies are sustainable and responsive into the future.
   * What the role for Wales will be in a digital age: where it can take a lead and in what areas.
   * The role of technology in supporting the economy, driving productivity and supporting equality – particularly in terms of income equality – and how technology can be used to build inclusive economies.
   * The importance of good quality data in supporting the review and the challenges of conveying messages about the robustness of existing data and evidence sources.
   * Understanding how organisations are tailoring technology to their own needs and how this is allowing them to work in different ways.
   * The importance of gaining community and grassroots thinking into the review.
2. **Roundtable introductions**
   1. Attendees introduced themselves and highlighted their initial thoughts regarding the review and potential areas of focus. The following section is a summary of the comments made.
   2. There is a close connection between the review and the 7 well-being goals from the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.
   3. Currently public bodies have put forward circa 99 objectives in response to the Act which focus on skills. However many of these objectives do not focus on the future of skills, particularly in response to technology change and automation.
   4. Public bodies will need help and the tools in order to think differently about how digital innovation will impact on their workforce and services in the future.
   5. There have been a number of curriculum reforms following the Donaldson Review which are in response to the digital economy.
   6. The review should consider the opportunities and challenges from a rural versus an urban perspective.
   7. An innovative communication strategy is needed in order to shift the narrative to focus more on the positive opportunities from technology and data use. For example in terms of data use in the health service in support of better patient outcomes. Identifying the right stakeholders will be important here.
   8. The review may also need to consider how everyday technologies are being adapted across the Welsh economy.
   9. Fostering the use of data is also important and should not just be focused on large data houses. There are also issues about the ownership of data and how it is used. Some of these elements may not be for the review to consider.
   10. Wales is well placed to be a first mover in a number of technology advancements and as a potential test bed for future technology development.
   11. Work is needed to consider how technology can support businesses to develop a path to value. What is the role of Wales in what is a highly disruptive arena? Where should Wales lead and where should it follow?
   12. Examples were given of the recruitment challenges faced by panel members and the issue of access to talent. What support could be provided to individuals from Wales to access job opportunities in new career paths?
   13. The skills of the future are unknown; the focus needs to be on developing core competencies and methods for unlocking the existing labour pool. A single initiative would work best rather than 4 or 5 half-baked ideas.
   14. The example was given of the co-bot working at Sony Pencoed. No individuals working at that site are on the minimum wage which is partly due to the positive impact robotics has had in mitigating repetitive tasks whilst allowing workers to develop into better skilled and better paid roles.
   15. Further consideration may be need on the topic of universal basic income, particularly for the self-employed element of the workforce. There is a risk of creating a new age of coal miners and steel workers who are not adapted to the future of work.
   16. Aligned to the debate on universal basic income, there has been some interesting work on universal infrastructure in reducing inequalities.
   17. There is unlikely to be a surplus of labour in the future. Furthermore, issues around an ageing workforce and population will have a significant impact on public services going forward, particularly in health and social care. What could the role of technology be in responding to these challenges?
   18. A revised curriculum should be considered with a particular focus on the International Baccalaureate given the breadth of skills and experience it seeks to combine.
   19. Members have been involved in exploring the point at which education institutions and industrial strategy meet, this includes a useful piece of work on health and social care as part of the UK Government’s Industrial Strategy which could prove useful.
   20. There are some particular issues about access to education and lifelong learning which may need further exploration. These are important in the context of driving future demand for skills.
   21. There is an opportunity for more data driven policy making, particularly on a regional level and in developing a more dynamic economic policy. There is also the issue of the foundational economy and how this is supported.
3. **Background and work undertaken to date**
   1. Matt Hicks provided members with background to the review and the activities which have led up to the inaugural expert panel meeting.
4. **Terms of Reference and initial Work Packages**
   1. Members highlighted the breadth of work associated with the terms of reference and the timescales for reporting recommendations. The request was made for officials to consider summarising the 10 objectives as currently presented in the terms of reference into a more manageable set of 4-5 combined objectives or themes.
   2. The potential use of a twitter account (or similar) to support communication activity was discussed. Members felt this would be a useful mechanism for sharing the results of any calls for evidence and having a more dynamic debate with stakeholders.
   3. Phil offered to circulate his Working Paper on ‘The Prospects for Skills and Employment in an Age of Digital Disruption: A Cautionary Note’.
   4. In respect of the work packages, the following comments were made:

* It would be beneficial to have an early indication of where the jobs of the future will come from and the key technologies they will employ.
* Mapping what Wales is strong at would also be of benefit.
* The work should consider drawing out the high level future trends – perhaps the top 10 of these.
* The work should consider the hybridisation of jobs.
* As well as best practice, consideration should also be given to what could be considered as bad practice or poor cases. This should look at where Wales can Wales lead. The answers for this work may be outside of Wales.
* The focus shouldn’t just be on the high-end technologies as everyday technologies will also play their part.
* Skills utilisation and access to talent is an important element as too is the issue of talent leaving Wales.
* The panel may want to consider the influence on City Deals/ Regions. The option to invite representatives of the City Deals to a future meeting should be considered.

1. **Forward look and future meeting dates**
   1. Members suggested holding meeting in alternative venues, for example the ONS Data Science Campus.
   2. The request was made for the next meeting to be held in London in order for the review to draw on the work being taken forward by the UK Government in this area and opportunities for linking with industry organisations, such as Tech Nation.
   3. Members requested for the Travel and Subsistence Form to be recirculated.
2. **Any other business**
   1. No items were raised under any other business.