

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT **CSMP UPDATE – 15 FEBRUARY 2011**

Response to the UK Government's Consultation on Student Immigration System

On 7 December 2010 the UK Government launched a consultation on the student immigration system which includes a proposal to close the PSW route. We believe that this recommendation would have a potentially negative effect on Scotland's population growth and our economy, and we have submitted our response to the consultation in which we oppose the UK Government's proposal and argue that the route should be retained.

Our response includes a proposal that a new graduate work visa based on the previous Fresh Talent: Working in Scotland Scheme, be introduced in Scotland if PSW is closed. This would allow graduates to take up skilled work for a period following graduation, and would be open to qualifying graduates of all UK higher and further education institutions.

The UK consultation ended on 31 January, and we have not yet received a response to our submission. We expect the UK's changes to the student immigration system, including those related to PSW, to be announced in the spring.

Scottish Parliamentary Enquiry Into Migration and Trafficking

On the 7 February the Scottish Government responded to the Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee report into Migration and Trafficking. The Scottish Government welcomes the publication of the report which made recommendations including closer cooperation between the Scottish Government, UKBA, COSLA and others in developing policy in support of Scotland's migrant communities.

Key points raised included the lack of reliable information available from official sources to allow for effective development of policy, and recognition of the approach taken by the CSMP partners in supporting local government to deliver services.

The committee has tabled a parliamentary debate on the report which takes place on 23 February.

Scottish Government Budget

On 9 February the Scottish Parliament passed the Scottish Government's £33bn Budget Bill. This sets economic recovery and the protection of frontline services against a cut of £1.3 Billion from the UK Government. Despite last minute concessions, the budget ensures that the Scottish Government's priorities are fully funded for the next 12 months.

Scottish Government Reorganisation

Following a wide ranging review of structures, a reorganisation of Scottish Government departments took place in January 2011. This aims to produce

significant savings in the budgets, including a reduction of 25% in the cost of the senior civil service. This restructuring begins this process with a reduction of 10% in the senior staff budget over 2011-12.

As a result of these changes, International Division, which contains Fresh Talent and Relocation Advisory Service, have been moved into the newly formed Directorate for International and Constitution (DIAC) under the leadership of Director Ken Thompson.

Francesca Osowska has moved to a new directorate responsible for the delivery of the Commonwealth Games and Regeneration policy. Staff under Fresh Talent Policy and the Relocation Advisory Service remain in their current locations in Edinburgh and Glasgow.