



**GLASGOW ECONOMIC COMMISSION**  
SUMMARY OF  
RECOMMENDATIONS



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# BUSINESS & INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT

Given the pressures on public expenditure at UK and Scottish Government levels, the Commission is of the view that for Glasgow's economy to flourish it is essential that economic development efforts in Glasgow are focused on maximising private sector growth, especially in a small number of key sectors.

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** The Commission recommends that a new, private-public leadership body is established to focus economic development efforts in Glasgow, to deliver on the city's economic potential and to ensure that Glasgow is "open for business". Its creation should be facilitated by all economic development partners.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** That senior private-sector leaders develop key sector strategies by working with leaders from further/higher education (FHE) and relevant economic development partners and that sector strategies to be agreed by the new leadership body.

**RECOMMENDATION 3:** That economic development efforts in Glasgow should focus on sectors with the potential to generate significant wealth and employment including: Low Carbon Industries, Engineering, Design & Manufacturing, Financial & Business Services, Life Sciences and Tourism & Events.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** In Low Carbon industries, the Commission sees opportunities to build Glasgow as a global low carbon industries 'hub' with the presence and investment of global energy and engineering firms, excellent university research and a pipeline of graduate skills.

**RECOMMENDATION 5:** In Engineering, Design & Manufacturing, the Commission sees opportunities to develop the city's export base by exploiting the design excellence of the Glasgow School of Art and the universities and prioritising the promotion of S.T.E.M. subjects to all our young people to enable them to pursue careers in Engineering and related industries.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:** In Life Sciences, the Commission recommends greater commercial exploitation of university / NHS research and of the wider economic and commercial potential of the £1bn + investment in the South Glasgow Hospitals Campus.

**RECOMMENDATION 7:** In Financial & Business Services, the Commission recommends that Glasgow's economic development partners plan and implement an IFSD-2, build on Glasgow's strengths in Financial Services and grasp opportunities emerging from the restructuring of the sector.

**RECOMMENDATION 8:** In Tourism and Events, the Commission recommends that Glasgow builds on the strong platform of new facilities and global promotion provided by the city's 'break-through' staging of the XX Commonwealth Games in 2014.

**RECOMMENDATION 9:** The Commission recommends greater global promotion of Glasgow's ambitions across key sectors and sees value in an effective 'in-Glasgow' investment team, modelled on the success of the Glasgow City Market Bureau (GCMB) and the International Financial Services District, working in partnership with Scottish Development International.

**RECOMMENDATION 10:** In the Creative Industries, the Commission recommends that the sector sets out its growth ambitions and a strategy that prioritises the commercial exploitation of the city's creative assets and talent.

# TRANSPORT & CONNECTIVITY

The Commission has reviewed a wide range of evidence on the impact of transport and digital infrastructure and the role they play in raising productivity, economic growth and competitiveness.

**RECOMMENDATION 11:** Glasgow's key connectivity priority is to improve connections to UK and international markets and the Commission recommends that all public agencies give greater urgency to improving air, rail, road and digital infrastructure to support the growth ambitions of key sectors.

**RECOMMENDATION 12:** That Glasgow City Council press the UK Government to seek early confirmation from BAA of its plans for the future ownership of Glasgow Airport.

**RECOMMENDATION 13:** That the Scottish Government reinstate a revised version of the Air Route Development Fund with a targeted scheme to support new route development to support the needs of businesses in the Glasgow city region and West of Scotland more widely.

**RECOMMENDATION 14:** That BAA, Transport Scotland and Glasgow and Renfrewshire Councils carry out a joint review of road and rail surface access options to Glasgow Airport to identify key improvements and in relation to the staging of the Commonwealth Games.

**RECOMMENDATION 15:** The Commission recommends that Glasgow City Council, Network Rail, Transport Scotland and HS2 Ltd commence detailed discussions to plan for High Speed Rail (HSR) train terminal options in Glasgow city centre and work with the UK Government to commit to a specific timescale to deliver a High Speed line to Glasgow and Edinburgh and to affirm HSR as a new UK national service.

**RECOMMENDATION 16:** The Commission recommends that BT confirm the roll-out programme for Superfast Broadband across Glasgow as soon as possible and that Scottish Enterprise and Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and others work to increase broadband use amongst businesses, especially SMEs and export-orientated businesses.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** That SE and GCC consider how they can help to drive demand for superfast broadband (e.g. via procurement and on-line services) across the city - especially in the City Centre, Clyde Waterfront and Clyde Gateway - and with the Chamber of Commerce - to work with Glasgow City Marketing Bureau / SDI to consider how such provision can be used to improve the city's inward investment 'offer'.

# INFRASTRUCTURE & INVESTMENT

Investment in the city's infrastructure is vital for Glasgow to attract and retain private investment. Glasgow needs to focus its energies on those areas that offer the greatest potential to accommodate economic activity and ensure that, in an era of constraints on public capital expenditure, it makes the most of innovative financing to help incentivise private investment in the city's infrastructure.

**RECOMMENDATION 17:** Given public expenditure constraints, the Commission recommends that Glasgow's economic development partners utilise a range of innovative funding and other mechanisms (BIDs, TIFs, EZ, ADZ, SPZ etc.) to catalyse infrastructure and private sector investment, principally in Glasgow City Centre, Clyde Waterfront and Clyde Gateway.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** The Scottish Government to consider the establishment of a Scottish Infrastructure Bank (or Fund) to advance-fund the servicing of sites in strategic investment areas and in vacant and derelict sites with development potential.

**RECOMMENDATION 18:** In the City Centre, the Commission recommends that the Style Mile Partnership / Glasgow City Council develop a new City Centre Business Improvement District (BID) proposal to help fund a City Centre Infrastructure Development Programme.

**RECOMMENDATION 19:** The Commission commends the Buchanan Quarter TIF (Tax Increment Financing) proposal, currently with the Scottish Government for approval, as an example of innovative financing to allow the early implementation of much-needed improvements to the city centre public realm.

**RECOMMENDATION 20:** In Clyde Waterfront, the Commission recommends that the Scottish Government support SE, GCC and private developers in the preparation of a business case for a River Clyde Accelerated Development Zone (ADZ) as a possible vehicle to part-fund the Inner Regional Fastlink Scheme (and its part-construction prior to the Commonwealth Games and completion of the South Glasgow Hospitals Campus), upgrade quayside walls and remediate vacant and derelict sites.

**RECOMMENDATION 21:** In Clyde Gateway, that the Urban Regeneration Company build on existing investment in the Commonwealth Games, M74 and digital infrastructure to expand industrial and Grade B commercial provision in support of key sectors, including developing a low carbon location 'offer' to business.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** That Scottish Power be encouraged to investigate how the use of 'Smart Grid' technology can be accelerated to underpin Glasgow's ambitions to be a low carbon industry hub and enhance Clyde Gateway's low carbon location 'offer'.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** That a Glasgow Infrastructure Planning Board be created to co-ordinate / maximise the economic impact of investment by all major infrastructure providers (private & public), and that Scottish Water and Scottish Power be asked to prepare capacity plans for key development sites in Clyde Waterfront, Clyde Gateway and elsewhere in order to maximise the city's 'investment readiness'.

# FURTHER & HIGHER EDUCATION

Glasgow's further and higher education institutions are critical economic assets in the Glasgow and city-region economy and are key to supporting business innovation, raising productivity, attracting investment and talent and increasing entrepreneurship.

**RECOMMENDATION 22:** The Commission recommends that Glasgow's FHE institutions are fully engaged at a senior level in the development of key sector strategies, to ensure FHEs provide 'smart' support in delivering skills and knowledge exchange to boost key sector competitiveness and innovation.

**RECOMMENDATION 23:** The Commission recommends that Glasgow Chamber of Commerce be resourced to enable it to support intelligence-sharing and best practice links between the Glasgow business community, FHE institutions and the key sectors via joint information-sharing and awareness-raising events.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** That each sector strategy group (with Glasgow's FHEs) consider the applicability of the National Skills Academy model to deliver technician / technologist and support-level skills to key sectors.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** FHEs to work with the Chamber of Commerce and private sector companies to consider how to expand work experience placements and internships, especially in key sectors, to support greater work-readiness among students and graduates.

**RECOMMENDATION 24:** The Commission recommends greater support for entrepreneurship with the city's FHE institutions, working with private partners and key enterprise organisations (e.g. Young Enterprise Scotland, Princes Scottish Youth Business Trust, The Hunter Centre and Business Gateway) to map current entrepreneurship support and how it can be expanded.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** Glasgow's FHE institutions to consider the development of a joint demand-based Prospectus to attract private investment in additional student accommodation across the city to increase the attractiveness of FHE to a wider student base.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** Glasgow's FHEs to consider working collaboratively to investigate the potential benefits of a shared procurement / services agenda (e.g. telecoms / ICT, energy, accommodation etc.) to increase business efficiency and attract private investment to the city.

**RECOMMENDATION 25:** The Commission recommends that the FHE institutions work collectively with Glasgow City Marketing Bureau to develop a considered 'Glasgow, City of Education' marketing campaign to attract more international (especially non-EU) students, research talent and academic investment to Glasgow.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** FHE institutions / Glasgow City Marketing Bureau to consider the scale and growth potential of "educational tourism" (e.g. visiting friends / relatives studying in Glasgow and visitors who come specifically to study on short-stay / summer courses) and how it might be expanded.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** Glasgow City Council to consider the opportunity, perhaps via the Buchanan Galleries TIF, to invest in the 'Avenue of the Arts' proposal and to upgrade the public realm between Buchanan Street and Glasgow Caledonian University, City of Glasgow College and University of Strathclyde to reflect the economic value of FHE to the city economy.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** Glasgow City Council and Glasgow University to consider plans to develop a international cultural hub centred on Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum, (a redeveloped) Kelvin Hall, and the University of Glasgow's Hunterian Museum, Art Gallery, Mackintosh House and associated University collections.

# OUR PEOPLE & SKILLS

Being able to access the right skills is a key element in Glasgow's investment attractiveness as is increasing our people's skills to ensure Glasgow's success in an increasingly knowledge-based, value-added global economy.

**RECOMMENDATION 26:** Glasgow Employer Board to expand its role to improve skills investment and utilisation in key sectors, stimulate greater / wider employer networking and collective action and articulate current and future skills needs to schools and FHE institutions.

**RECOMMENDATION 27:** Glasgow Employer Board to engage with the Glasgow Works Partnership Board to ensure close alignment of national and local employment programmes (e.g. Commonwealth Jobs Fund) and (private, public sector and Third Sector) providers with the skills needs of key sectors and those sectors with known demand.

**RECOMMENDATION 28:** That public procurement contracts are used to more actively promote increased employment, training and work-experience opportunities.

**FOR CONSIDERATION:** That Glasgow City of Science, Scottish Engineering and others consider developing a joint campaign to attract and inform Glasgow's young people on career pathways in Low Carbon industries and Engineering (e.g. renewables, marine, aerospace, civil, electrical and software engineering) and other key sectors, and seek ways to expand delivery of existing initiatives and attract under-represented groups.

**RECOMMENDATION 29:** That GCC, Skills Development Scotland and partners engage the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Jobcentre Plus (JCP) to pilot more flexible approaches for those on benefits to train without adversely affecting their income and provide more focused opportunities to move from welfare to work.

Published June 2011

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