

Written Response by the Welsh Government to the report of the Enterprise and Business Committee entitled Horizon 2020: Stage 2 Report

June 2013

A. INTRODUCTION AND KEY ISSUES OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

1. I welcome the opportunity to respond to the Enterprise and Business Committee's report on Wales' profile and participation in Horizon 2020, the European Union's proposed research and innovation funding programme from 2014.
2. Horizon 2020 is potentially worth around €70 billion among EU Member States for the 2014–2020 period and I want to see Wales as a European leader in maximising the opportunities for research and innovation that this externally administered EU funding stream offers, in turn securing global competitiveness and creating jobs and growth in Wales.
3. The scale of programme elements such as Horizon 2020 and the scale of its activities will become clearer as soon as agreement is reached on the Multi Annual Financial Framework.

B. Detailed Responses to the report's recommendations are set out below:

The Committee recommends that:

Recommendation 1: Include with its response to our stage 2 report, an update on progress made against all 16 recommendations of our stage 1 report.

Response: Accept

An update has been provided as an Annex to this response. Where the update is addressed by a response (or responses) to the recommendations of the Stage 2 report then appropriate references have been made.

Financial Implications: None.

Recommendation 2: Examine and assess the role of Ireland's National Support Network for FP7, the lessons learned and the good practice that could be applied in a Welsh context to facilitate engagement with the Horizon 2020 framework.

Response: Accept

WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit has been engaging with Irish (and Northern Irish) colleagues on their approach to FP7 and preparations for Horizon 2020. A further meeting is already planned with Dr Imelda Lambkin, National Director of Ireland's National Support Network at the end of July.

This engagement will help inform the strategic planning of the Unit, although Ireland's status as a Member State means that not all of the practice is applicable in a Welsh context.

Financial Implications: Any additional costs for this engagement will be drawn from existing budgets but the adoption of any identified best practice may have financial implications which can not be quantified at this stage.

Recommendation 3: Examine and assess the impact of Scotland's Steering Group for Research and Innovation and its new Support Framework for Horizon 2020 and draw out any lessons to inform the development of a more strategic approach to providing support mechanisms in Wales.

Response: Accept

WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit met recently with key Scottish Government and Scottish Europa colleagues on their approach to FP7 and preparations for Horizon 2020, including the role of their Steering Group for Research and Innovation. This engagement has already identified some useful best practice around accessing Brussels networks which will help inform the strategic planning of the Unit. WEFO is also in regular contact with Scottish colleagues on the development of the 2014-2020 EU Structural Funds programmes, including approaches to research and innovation. Further engagement will take place as the Structural Fund programmes develop and the Horizon 2020 Unit further examines the opportunities for continuous improvement in the support structure in Wales.

Financial Implications: Any additional costs for this engagement will be drawn from existing budgets but the adoption of any identified best practice may have financial implications which can not be quantified at this stage.

Recommendation 4: Consider the effectiveness of the current National Contact Point network in supporting participation from Wales in FP7, and how the new Horizon 2020 unit in WEFO fits within that review.

Response: Accept

A key aim of WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit is to maximise the impact of the existing support for accessing FP7/Horizon 2020 at Welsh, UK and EU levels for the benefit of Welsh organisations. The Welsh Government is committed to improving Welsh organisations' access to FP7/Horizon 2020 National Contact Points (NCPs) and the Unit has already established a good working relationship with the current NCPs and brought them to Wales for targeted events; for example, the ICT NCP presented to Welsh businesses and stakeholders at the Unit's Horizon 2020 workshop in a high profile Digital 2013 event in June.

As the formal Regional Contact point for FP7 (and in the future Horizon 2020), WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit is already part of the wider NCP network. In this role, the Unit has set out the requirements of Welsh organisations during the recent review of the NCPs by the UK Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Technology Strategy Board (TSB). Both BIS and TSB have welcomed the creation of WEFO's the Unit as a central contact for their engagement with Wales on Horizon 2020 and close engagement continues. We understand that the BIS/TSB review has recommended that the NCP network is enhanced from 2014 onwards with more NCPs, most of whom will be full-

time, and will have a close alignment with the TSB's industrial agenda. WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit will ensure that this additional resource is fully utilised in Wales. However, the Unit will continue to work with stakeholders on identifying opportunities for continuous improvement in support, including through the planned independent evaluation. Where opportunities are identified, then the Unit will look to enhance the support available by working with stakeholders or if necessary additional investment, with Structural Funds playing a role wherever appropriate.

Financial Implications: Additional funding will be required for the evaluation and to address any opportunities to improve support, although the use of structural funds may be appropriate in some cases.

Recommendation 5: Charge the new Horizon 2020 unit in WEFO with raising the profile of Wales in Europe, including pooling the use of people and resources in Brussels to maximise impact.

Response: Accept in principle

One of the main aims of WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit is to maximise the impact of the existing support at Welsh, UK and EU levels for accessing FP7/Horizon 2020 funding by proactively engaging and focussing these existing resources and expertise in the most efficient way for the benefit of Welsh organisations. This engagement already includes the people and resources in Brussels with close links being developed with sources of support and information such as the Welsh Higher Education Brussels office and the Welsh Government Brussels office. This builds on WEFO's existing close relationships and reputation for delivery with the European Commission.

The targeting of activity and support in Brussels is possible without any direct "pooling" of people or resources. However, the Unit is already committed to working with stakeholders on identifying any opportunities for continuous improvement in support and the planned independent evaluation on Horizon 2020 support will consider the potential role of Brussels' resources within its scope. Where opportunities are identified, then the Unit will look to enhance the support available by working with stakeholders or if necessary additional investment, with Structural Funds potentially playing a role.

Financial Implications: Any additional costs for increased engagement in Brussels will be drawn from existing budgets wherever possible but funding will be required for the independent evaluation and any additional investment to address any opportunities to improve support, although the use of structural funds may be appropriate in some cases.

Recommendation 6: Ensure staff within the new WEFO unit have the necessary mix of technical, scientific and business skills and expertise, which have proved so successful in Scotland, Ireland, Aragon and Catalonia.

Response: Accept in principle

The Unit must have access to a range of technical, scientific and business skills and expertise in order to perform their role but this does not necessarily have to be held within the Unit. There is a significant amount of skills, experience and expertise already available at Welsh, UK (to be enhanced under the current review of National Contact Points) and EU levels and it is a key aim of the Unit to engage and focus these existing resources and expertise for the benefit of Welsh organisations. This will be the most efficient way of addressing the support needed and will avoid duplication. The Unit will

also work with stakeholders on identifying opportunities for continuous improvement in support including through the planned independent evaluation; where opportunities are identified, for example access to technical expertise, then the Unit will look to enhance the support available through additional investment, with Structural Funds potentially playing a role.

Financial Implications: Additional funding will be required for the evaluation and to address any opportunities to improve support, although the use of structural funds may be appropriate in some cases.

Recommendation 7: Evaluate the legacy of projects funded by FP7 projects and consider how the economic and social benefits of activity supported under Horizon 2020 can be sustained more broadly.

Response: Accept in principle

Challenges remain in accessing reliable data on FP7 activity in Wales but WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit is working with stakeholders to establish what reliable data about the use of FP7/Horizon 2020 funding might be obtainable across Europe. We will then be able to consider how best to set a 'baseline' for Horizon 2020 activity and what challenging, yet achievable targets might be set for the Unit and the Welsh research and innovation community. In addition, the terms and conditions of the recently launched support scheme SCoRE Cymru will allow the Horizon 2020 Unit to track activity that it has supported. The Unit is also engaging with Welsh Universities to access information on their applications to FP7/Horizon 2020 wherever possible. The Welsh Government therefore accepts the need to establish a 'baseline' against which performance can be judged.

Until the 'baseline' work is complete it is difficult to assess whether an evaluation of the economic and social impacts of activity supported under FP7/Horizon 2020 is feasible, but it would appear to be challenging. If an independent evaluation is feasible, then this will be considered if it will add value to existing information; the Welsh Higher Education sector will have a role to play here as well.

It is worth noting that any future requests for Structural Fund investments in activity that builds capacity directly linked to improving access to research funding such as Horizon 2020 will need to demonstrate a significant potential economic and social impact before approval by WEFO. The impact of those structural fund investments will then be tested by independent evaluation.

Financial Implications: Any independent evaluation will require additional funding.

Recommendation 8: Charge the new WEFO unit with cascading and encouraging exploitation and application of the outcomes of EU research projects.

Response: Accept in Principle

WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit and WEFO in general already have a role in communicating the opportunities and benefits of accessing EU research and innovation funding – whether Structural Funds or FP7/Horizon 2020; this is one of the synergistic advantages of the Unit being based within WEFO. The Unit is already making progress in this area,

including in relation to Horizon 2020 through targeted events and other media/press activity.

It is appropriate for the Unit or WEFO to have a role in the cascading, exploitation and application of the outcomes of EU research projects. Working through its stakeholders, the Unit will encourage and support strategic investments that build on successful EU research and that in turn will cascade, exploit and apply that research.

The Unit will work closely with the Department for the Economy, Science and Transport's Innovation and Science Division to ensure that the National Research Networks being established under the Ser Cymru programme, and collaborative projects supported under A4B funding, consider all relevant EU research projects and how they can be further developed in their work.

Financial Implications: None, communication activities will be funded from existing budgets.

Recommendation 9: Encourage the higher education sector to be more focused and disciplined in deciding on its strongest specialisations and in building on those priorities moving forward.

Response: Accept

Science for Wales identified three 'Grand Challenge Areas' where the evidence demonstrated that Wales had particular research strengths and where future support should be prioritised. This specialisation is currently being supported through the establishment of a National Research Network (NRN) in each of these areas.

The higher education sector has been requested to produce proposals for NRNs which are focussed on their strongest specialisations and they will be charged with building on these priorities as they begin their operations later in 2013.

Financial Implications: None, National Research Networks are funded under existing Sêr Cymru budgets.

Recommendation 10: Clarify the role of the new National Research Networks in driving forward participation in Horizon 2020, and how this will be complemented by the new unit in WEFO.

Response: Accept

The new National Research Networks (NRNs) will be expected to engage fully with the Horizon 2020 programme, influencing the content of calls for funding by high level engagement from the NRN Directors, identifying opportunities for Welsh involvement and by producing high quality proposals for funding across all relevant strands of the programme.

WEFO and its Horizon 2020 Unit will therefore engage with the new National Research Networks either directly or through Welsh Government colleagues in order to inform WEFO's judgements on where best to target both Horizon 2020 support and structural fund investments.

Financial Implications: None, activities will be funded from existing budgets.

Recommendation 11: Ensure an integrated approach to EU funding streams will continue under the new cabinet portfolios announced in March 2013, and that WEFO will have a key role in promoting collaboration and integration on the ground.

Response: Accept

Responsibility for Structural Funds has been transferred to my portfolio in line with the recommendations of an independent review undertaken by Dr Grahame Guildford on implementation arrangements for future programmes.

Welsh Ministers are committed to working together across Ministerial portfolios, including the integration of EU funds to help transform our economic prospects and make it easier for organisations to engage, access and benefit from EU funds. Integration of European Structural and Investment funds is being progressed on many levels within the flexibilities of EC legislation, including:

- the work of the European Programmes Partnership Forum in providing strategic direction on the development of the future ESI programmes and the recent joint public consultation;
- a single Programme Monitoring Committee (as outlined in the joint Ministerial Written Statement issued on 25 June);
- the development of a Wales Chapter as part of the UK Partnership Agreement;
- agreement that the Economic Prioritisation Framework recommended as part of the Guilford Review should highlight economic opportunities for all ESI funds; and
- the development of a single portal access to ESI funds and, where possible, common application processes and guidance, due diligence and appraisal, performance indicator and monitoring arrangements.
- Horizon 2020 Unit established in WEFO to maximise synergy between EU research and innovation funding and Structural Funds.

Financial Implications: None, activities will be funded from existing budgets.

Recommendation 12: Actively support a more strategic partnership - a Welsh version of the successful approaches in Ireland and Scotland - between higher education and businesses in Wales, in respect of the opportunities presented by Horizon 2020. This should include hosting an annual Horizon 2020 conference or science week in Wales to raise the profile of EU funded research, to broker ideas and to showcase successful projects.

Response: Accept

WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit is already actively promoting and supporting a more strategic approach in Wales to accessing Horizon 2020 funding by building links between key stakeholders. In doing so, the Unit will maximise the impact of the existing support for accessing FP7/Horizon 2020 at the Welsh, UK and EU levels for the benefit of all Welsh organisations. Improving the links between business and Higher Education is a priority for the Welsh Government and the Unit is working with the Department for the Economy, Science and Transport's sector teams on identifying businesses who could engage in collaborative research, particularly in the Science for Wales Grand Challenge areas. The Unit will also work with stakeholders on identifying other opportunities to improve support including through the planned independent evaluation. Where opportunities are identified, then the Unit will look to enhance the support available through working with

stakeholders or if necessary additional investment, with Structural Funds potentially playing a role.

The Unit is also taking every opportunity to raise the profile of EU funded research, broker ideas and showcase successful projects, for example through the WEFO website and the recent Horizon 2020 workshop at the high profile Digital 2013 event. A number of further events are planned for the Autumn, including a Horizon 2020 launch event. If appropriate, this launch event may develop into an annual event, potentially linked to WEFO's existing commitment to arranging an annual event on Structural Funds, to demonstrate synergy between the funds.

Financial Implications: Many awareness activities can be funded from existing budgets but any significant additional activity such as conferences will require additional funding. Additional funding will be required for the evaluation and to address any opportunities to improve support, although the use of structural funds may be appropriate in some cases.

Recommendation 13: Start building the strategic capacity for Welsh partners to engage with the anticipated Knowledge Innovation Communities (KICs) programme in 2018 in areas that build upon Welsh strengths and expertise. This should include consideration of using EU Structural Funds to kick-start activity in this area.

Taken with:

Recommendation 14: Consider hosting a conference, in partnership with the higher education sector, to raise awareness of the opportunities for Welsh institutions and businesses offered by the new wave of KICs.

Response to 13 & 14: Accept in principle

Since the Welsh Government's response to the Committee's first report, considerable work to develop Wales' first National Research Networks (NRNs) has been undertaken. The negotiations with the NRN lead universities are well advanced and it is expected that the Networks will be operational at the start of the academic year in 2013, that is by October 2013. We still feel that these Networks may provide an effective means of encouraging and facilitating appropriate Welsh businesses and research institutions' involvement with knowledge innovation communities or KICs. Also it may be through these Networks that any proposals emerge for additional activity that can support the right environment in Wales for greater engagement with KICs; these proposals could then be considered for Structural Fund support alongside other priorities.

As advised before, the present three KICs operate under the umbrella of the European Institute of Technology and are led by major Universities on a European scale. Only one Welsh institution – Aberystwyth University, is involved – as an academic affiliate partner of the Climate KIC and we are not aware of the involvement of any Wales-based businesses. Whilst Welsh higher education institutions may be unlikely to be core partners in a KIC programme, Welsh Government can continue to encourage them to engage with these networks, whenever possible. WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit will raise awareness of the opportunities that KICs present alongside the other opportunities that Horizon 2020 offers, including through appropriate targeted events where necessary.

Financial Implications: The majority of activity to encourage appropriate Universities and businesses to become involved in present or future KICs is likely to be met from existing budgets, such as the existing funding for National Research Networks under Sêr Cymru or the activities of the Horizon 2020 Unit, provided that the time and resource

commitment justifies the involvement. Additional funding will be required for any conferences or to address any opportunities to improve support, although the use of structural funds may be appropriate in some cases.

Recommendation 15: Explore how Welsh businesses can participate more fully in the Marie Curie Actions under Horizon 2020, and how the initiative can be used for the professional development of academic staff to keep them based in Wales.

Response: Accept

Increasing the participation of Welsh businesses, particularly SMEs, in accessing Horizon 2020 is a key aim of WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit. The Unit will work closely with stakeholders to identify any organisations with the potential to access funding that have missed opportunities because of a lack of awareness or support; this will include accessing Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions where appropriate.

The Welsh Government is keen to promote researcher mobility across borders and between sectors and research areas. It is also supportive of measures to enhance career development for researchers, although it is for Welsh Higher Education institutes to develop their staff. Such activities will strengthen the European Research area. Researchers from and in Wales have benefitted from funding through the Marie Curie Actions but it may not be possible or appropriate to restrict support to activity that will keep researchers in Wales. That said, the Horizon 2020 Unit has already supported one researcher through its SCoRE Cymru grant scheme (the successor to the Welsh European Collaboration Fund) to develop a bid for Marie Curie Actions where the benefit should reside in Wales. Also the Unit is in early discussions with Welsh Higher Education institutes about a pan Wales initiative to improve success in accessing the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions under Horizon 2020, where the aim is to retain the successful candidates in Wales.

Financial Implications: Engagement and awareness raising are likely to be funded from existing budgets but any additional proposals to support businesses or Higher Education in accessing Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions will require funding, although the use of structural funds may be appropriate in some cases.

Recommendation 16: In collaboration with the higher education sector, pursue the opportunities of the CoFund under Horizon 2020 in the context of delivering the Science for Wales strategy.

Response: Accept in principle

The higher education sector will be encouraged to pursue all opportunities for enhancing research funding in Wales, including that through the Co Fund programme, if that is felt to be appropriate once the details of how any such initiative might operate in Horizon 2020 become available.

Financial Implications: Match funding would be required for any CoFund initiative that Wales took part in. A range of funding sources would need to be considered by all organisations involved in the scheme but that can not be quantified at this stage.

Recommendation 17: As part of its review of the Welsh European Fund, consider the benefits of the Irish experience of managing flexible support schemes that encourage mobility and engagement at an EU level.

Response: Accept

WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit completed its review with key partners of the Welsh European Collaboration Fund (WECF) in April and a new scheme SCoRE Cymru (Supporting Collaborative Research and innovation in Europe) was launched in May. The scheme provides funding support to stimulate Welsh organisations to participate in EU collaborative research such as FP7 and Horizon 2020 by supporting the travel costs incurred in building partnerships and attending relevant events and bid writing costs.

Improvements in SCoRE Cymru include an increase in the travel related assistance rate for SMEs from 50% to 100% and a 25% increase in the assistance rate for Universities if they travel with a potential SME partner; both of these changes directly address the participation of SMEs in FP7/Horizon 2020. Greater flexibility has been introduced through SCoRE Cymru which will now support early consortium building activity and relevant travel outside the EU and to UK destinations. The application process has been simplified with the aim of reducing turnover time and the assessment criteria now focus on the quality of the proposal rather than fixed eligibility rules.

We have already advised that an independent evaluation to identify opportunities for continuous improvement in Horizon 2020 support is planned and this will consider the role of SCoRE Cymru. We can not pre judge the results of the evaluation, but it is possible that any Phase 2 of SCoRE Cymru will extend its activities beyond travel and bid writing support.

Financial Implications: SCoRE Cymru is being taken forward within the existing Welsh Government budget for the WECF. It is recognised that further funds will be required if demand exceeds that budget or Phase 2 of the scheme includes additional activities. In these circumstances, there will be a further call on the Welsh Government budget although it is not possible to estimate the extent of that call at this stage; other funding sources will be considered including the use of Structural Funds.

Annex

Update on Written Response of 20 September 2012 by the Welsh Government to the report of the Enterprise & Business Committee entitled 'Horizon 2020: Stage 1 Report'

Recommendation 1: The Welsh Government should, through the UK Government's voice in Council, seek an amendment to the Horizon 2020 draft proposals so that the Marie Curie Actions budget for 2014 is at least the same as for 2013.

Update to previous response:

The UK Government remains supportive of the Welsh Government's position. The budget for Horizon 2020 is still ultimately dependent on the outcome of the negotiations on the overall EU Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014 – 2020. The February European Council agreed a better-framed EU budget in terms of growth, jobs and competitiveness. Research and development, and other pro-growth investment, will now account for 13% rather than 9% of the total EU budget. The section of the budget that includes spending on research, innovation and university funding is up by over a third. Negotiations with the European Parliament are, however, still under way. In respect of the Horizon 2020 negotiations, many other Member States share similar views on the importance of the Marie Curie Actions, as do the European Parliament, and the Welsh Government through the UK Government are continuing to encourage an outcome which ensures a larger share of the H2020 budget goes to these measures. Again discussions with the European Parliament are still ongoing.

Financial Implications: None for the Welsh Government.

Recommendation 2: The Welsh Government should seek clarity on how research in the social sciences, arts and humanities will be supported by EU proposals, and how they sit within Horizon 2020 in particular.

Update to previous response:

No significant change. The European Commission's proposals to mainstream research in the social sciences, arts and humanities throughout Horizon 2020 remains, which the Welsh Government sees as a positive move. The proposal to divide the sixth societal challenge ('Inclusive, innovative and secure societies') into two also remains and should provide social sciences, arts and humanities researchers with clearer access to funding in several key areas.

Financial Implications: None.

Recommendation 3: The European Commission should be encouraged to publish profiles showing the regional breakdowns of applications to, and successful projects funded from, the Framework Research Programme (FP7) and Horizon 2020.

Update to previous response:

The Welsh Government continues to raise this with the European Commission directly where appropriate and through the UK Government. There has been some movement in

recent years with the ranking table of the top 50 EU27 NUTS 2 level regions released in 2011 and the inclusion of illustrations (or Maps) of all regions, this time to NUTS 3 level in 2012. The European Commission has strict confidentiality rules for Framework Programme data which we do not think will be relaxed. The next FP7 Annual Monitoring report is expected to be published by the European Commission in August 2013 but it is not clear whether the European Commission intends to include further regional information.

See also the response to recommendation 7 of the Stage 2 report.

Financial Implications: Please see response to recommendation 7 of the Stage 2 report.

Recommendation 4: In response to the conclusions and recommendations of our report, the Welsh Government should publish a statement that sets out its position on the Horizon 2020 proposals. We urge Welsh Ministers to advocate its position with the UK Government and through the European Parliament.

Update to previous response:

No change to previous response.

Financial Implications: None.

Recommendation 5: The Welsh higher education sector should provide information on the levels of participation in the 2013 call under FP7, which will provide the first opportunity to assess whether dedicated support for drafting and submitting funding bids is bearing fruit.

Update to previous response:

Recommendation not addressed to the Welsh Government, but please see response to recommendation 7 of the Stage 2 report.

Financial Implications: None for the Welsh Government.

Recommendation 6: The higher education sector should clarify how its approach in focusing on four research groups will work effectively with the focus on three “grand challenges” in the Welsh Government’s Science for Wales strategy.

Update to previous response:

Recommendation not addressed to the Welsh Government, but please see response to recommendation 9 of the Stage 2 report.

Financial Implications: None for the Welsh Government.

Recommendation 7: The Welsh Government should, in discussion with the Welsh higher education sector, explore the potential for developing a CoFund Initiative under Horizon 2020 for continuous professional development of academic staff.

Update to previous response:

Please see response to recommendation 16 of the Stage 2 report.

Financial Implications: Please see response to recommendation 16 of the Stage 2 report.

Recommendation 8: The Committee recommends that The Welsh Government should articulate how exactly it will align funding from Horizon 2020 with EU Structural Funding to achieve synergies for improving Wales's performance in winning research, development and innovation funding and in commercialising that activity.

Update to previous response:

This is being addressed as part of the development of the European Structural and Investment programmes for 2014-2020 in Wales. The Welsh Government will identify in the UK Partnership Agreement (strategic document at UK level which includes a Welsh Chapter) and in the individual Operational Programmes (fund-specific programming documents) where alignment and synergies will be sought.

A number of the responses to the Stage 2 report provide an update on this recommendation, where since the last update a Horizon 2020 Unit has been established within WEFO to maximise synergies between the funds.

Financial Implications: Any financial implications are set out in the relevant responses to the Stage 2 report.

Recommendation 9: The Welsh Government should drive forward a smart specialisation strategy, in consultation with key stakeholders, which aims to create a real culture of innovation throughout academia and industry in Wales.

Update to previous response:

A 'Review Version' of Innovation Wales was published on the Welsh Government website in March 2013, following the consultation process and incorporating the input of the external Task and Finish Group, chaired by Professor Kevin Morgan.

Following the publication of the strategy, ES&T officials attended a peer review session of the European Commission Smart Specialisation Platform along with representatives from a number of Commission departments and several other European regions, also involved in developing smart specialisation strategies.

The platform considered the Welsh Government's consultation and engagement process to be an example of good practice and that Wales was well advanced in the process of policy development.

Input from a number of other Welsh Government Departments has also been received and is being incorporated into Innovation Wales with a view to producing a final version in summer 2013.

Financial Implications: No new implications.

Recommendation 10: The Welsh Government should, in its review of WEFO, set out how more effective and more accessible support will be made available in the future to develop the expertise and capacity of Welsh higher education institutions and businesses in preparing applications under Horizon 2020.

Taken with

Recommendation 11: The Welsh Government should, as part of its review of the management arrangements for EU programmes, establish mechanisms to encourage and support academics and companies in Wales in bidding for European research and innovation funding, including support for the travel and transnational networking and partnership costs associated with developing successful consortia.

Update to previous response to 10 & 12:

Since the last update WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit has been created and the support scheme SCoRE Cymru has been launched. A number of the responses to the Stage 2 report provide further information on these developments.

The new National Research Networks will also be expected to engage fully with the Horizon 2020 programme, influencing the content of calls by high level engagement from the NRN Directors, identifying opportunities for Welsh involvement and by producing high quality proposals for funding across all relevant strands of the programme.

Financial Implications: Any financial implications are set out in the relevant responses to the Stage 2 report.

Recommendation 12: The Welsh Government should encourage all Welsh higher education institutions to employ a technical transfer officer, and should request regular reports on universities' performance in relation to the numbers of research and development funding applications submitted and projects commercialised.

Update to previous response:

No significant change to previous response. The response to recommendation 7 of the Stage 2 report provides further information on proposals to 'baseline' FP7/Horizon 2020 performance.

Financial Implications: See response to recommendation 7 of the Stage 2 report.

Recommendation 13: The Welsh Government should consider a wide range of innovative methods to promote awareness of European funding opportunities in order to engage small and medium-sized companies more effectively.

Update to previous response:

No significant change to previous response. A number of the responses to the Stage 2 report provide an update on the Welsh Government's plans to raise awareness of, and improve the participation of SMEs in Horizon 2020.

Financial Implications: Any financial implications are set out in the relevant responses to the Stage 2 report.

Recommendation 14: The Welsh Government should work with stakeholders on building connections and access to international expertise and major company activity in order to engage with knowledge and innovation communities post-Horizon 2020.

Update to previous response:

See response to recommendations 13 & 14 of the Stage 2 report.

Financial Implications: See response to recommendations 13 & 14 of the Stage 2 report.

Recommendation 15: The Welsh Government, together with higher education institutions, should identify how best to collate and coordinate accurate data on the national and international collaborations and networks involving organisations from Wales that bid for funding under Horizon 2020, and should monitor Wales' relative performance in this area.

Update to previous response:

No significant change to previous response. See update on recommendation 3 above and the response to recommendation 7 of the Stage 2 report which provides further information on proposals to 'baseline' FP7/Horizon 2020 performance.

Financial Implications: See response to recommendation 7 of the Stage 2 report.

Recommendation 16: The Welsh Government should promote the participation of individuals from Welsh higher education and business sectors as expert advisers in the FP7 and Horizon 2020 programmes and in EU level research, innovation and technology networks and platforms established in Brussels, to improve Wales's profile and performance in this field.

Update to previous response:

No significant change to previous response. WEFO's Horizon 2020 Unit actively promoted the recent call for experts from the European Commission.

Financial Implications: None for the Welsh Government. Any work to encourage such involvement will be undertaken within existing budgets.