

Thursday 19 March 2015

Colleges Scotland Comment on The Budget

As analysts digest the detail of Chancellor George Osborne's Budget, Colleges Scotland has commented on two aspects of the Budget presented to Parliament on Wednesday 18 March 2015.

Oil and Gas Industry

In his Budget statement Chancellor George Osborne announced major changes to the North Sea tax regime, in response to difficulties facing the UK oil and gas sector. The Chancellor said the measures would boost expected North Sea oil production by 15% by the end of the decade. The government will also invest in new seismic surveys of under-explored areas of the UK Continental Shelf.

Shona Struthers, Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland, said: *"Colleges in Scotland already play a key role in providing the skilled and trained workforce necessary for Scotland to have a successful oil and gas industry. This is another example of colleges contributing to the economy of Scotland, and the colleges look forward to supporting the industry's current and future training needs ensuring we have the skilled workforce the industry will need going forward."*

Jim Brown, Director of the Energy Skills Partnership added: *"Colleges have been working very hard to ensure they have industry led programmes in place to support the whole of the energy sector. Colleges have maintained their focus on engineering that ensures there are sufficient well trained and educated students to meet industry's skills demands. This Budget announcement is excellent news for both the sector and for Scotland's future economy."*

City Deals for Aberdeen and Inverness

Following the announcement of the funding package around the recent City Deal for Glasgow, Chancellor George Osborne announced that the Government would open negotiations on new city deals for Aberdeen and Inverness.

Shona Struthers, Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland, said: *"Following the involvement of colleges in the previous Glasgow City Deal, Colleges Scotland looks forward to working with the government, local authorities and other stakeholders, to play its part in developing the new City Deals. The regional colleges have been designed and are ready to maximise the opportunities for training and upskilling and to provide students ready for the world of work in order to support economic development, whilst also bringing benefits to the local communities."*

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