

**Tuesday, 20 October 2020**

### **Comment on the SFC Review**

Commenting on the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) Phase 1 Report: Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability, published today, Shona Struthers, Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland, said:

“This is an important review for the college sector, and we welcomed the opportunity to work with the SFC to contribute our views and highlight both the opportunities and challenges that colleges are facing now and in the future, particularly given the pandemic.

“The report sets out the basis for creating a more collaborative and inclusive approach to tertiary education, something that the college sector has been seeking for some time, that puts the learner at the heart of the system and ensures that everyone regardless of their age or background has access to education and training at every stage of life without having to repeat learning or duplicate effort at each step.

“The report also notes the critical role that colleges will play in Scotland's recovery, supporting Scotland's future, getting our citizens back to work, ensuring a focus on both social and economic recovery, and contributing to the success of the changed economy of the Scotland of the future. Colleges make a fundamental contribution to Scotland's labour market, helping to meet employers' needs and ensuring that students have the right skills and training to succeed in the workplace.

“The college sector's financial difficulties are well documented and this report acknowledges the sustainability challenges that colleges have and the impact of COVID-19 on college budgets including the need to shift swiftly to remote online teaching and tackle digital poverty. This review provides an opportunity to provide the college sector with greater certainty of funding, more flexibility and streamlined funding in future.

“We look forward to working with the SFC and key stakeholders to take forward phase 2 of the review and developing the key themes further.”

**ENDS**

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**Notes:**

A copy of the report can be found at <http://www.sfc.ac.uk/publications-statistics/corporate-publications/2020/SFCCP052020.aspx>