D

REGIONAL BOARD REPORT

Subject: Scottish Government 50/50 by 2020 Pledge: Working for Diversity in the Board Room – Partnerships for Change	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☒ **For Discussion** ☐ **For Information** ☐
Prepared by: David Killean	**Date:** 15 February 2017

Purpose: To provide information to the Board on the Scottish Government 50/50 by 2020 Pledge: Working for Diversity in the Board Room that will help to inform their decision.

Executive Summary:

The Board will remember that at the previous meeting of the Regional Board (December 2016) a lively discussion was had as to whether to sign up to the '50/50 by 2020' pledge. The Chair agreed at the conclusion of this discussion to raise the issue through the sign up process that a pledge on Board diversity should be much broader than purely the focus on gender set out in making this pledge.

It is not possible to follow this instruction from the Board because of the nature and functionality of the Pledge website.

The attached information gives further information on the Pledge. By signing up to the Pledge the Board is joining Partnerships for Change. This is a group of organisations who are committed to bringing greater diversity to the Boardroom. It is not just a focus on gender. It recognising the benefits that there are to having greater diversity both within the Board and senior team. It also means access to resources that help in planning for greater diversity and we will be joining other organisations such as Alliance Trust, Transport Scotland, The Robertson Trust and many others in making this commitment.

Recommendation:
To join Partnerships for Change by signing the Pledge

Previous Committee Approvals:

For publication ☒	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☐

Signed:

Author **Principal**

50/50 by 2020

Equality and diversity are key to Scotland's success. Historically, women have been under-represented in public and corporate leadership. As a nation that prides itself on fairness, we seek to create equal opportunities for all regardless of gender, disability, ethnic background, age, religion/belief or sexual orientation. However, there's also compelling evidence that having greater diversity of thinking and talent in the management team, and in organisations overall, leads to better performance. Put simply, both large and small businesses do significantly better when they have more gender balance in the boardroom and more diversity in the workforce.

A fair and prosperous Scotland has no ceiling for ambition and talent and opportunities for all to flourish. It is perhaps not surprising that companies with a more modern, progressive, open-minded, meritocratic approach do better. They outperform their rivals by simply making the best use of all the talents at their disposal.

There is clear consensus that increasing diversity in the boardroom and in senior leadership encourages new and innovative thinking, maximises use of talent and leads to better business decisions and governance. The **Scottish Government's Programme for Government (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/programme-for-government)** encourages public, private and third sector organisations to sign up to the **Partnership for Change** and to set a voluntary commitment for gender balance on their boards of 50/50 by 2020.

We want you to commit to making progress on gender balance by putting in place progressive practices in your business today and by signing up to the **'Partnership for Change'**. The **Partnership for Change** is a network of organisations and individuals who share a common ambition to improve diversity on boards and in senior leadership. By joining this network, organisations and individuals can share learning and experience in improving gender balance and diversity in the boardroom and beyond and access development opportunities to help bring talent to the boardroom, today and tomorrow. We want people to set themselves a voluntary commitment to work towards gender balance on their boards by 2020 – 50/50 by 2020 – to demonstrate a real commitment to change.

Video of the 50/50 by 2020 Launch Event with the First Minister

You can join the **Partnership for Change** network by signing up here: