

**CAITHNESS & NORTH SUTHERLAND REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP
(CRP) – EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 20th MARCH 2008 AT T3IUK,
JANETSTOWN**

Present: Sir Anthony Cleaver (Chair)
Alistair Dodds, THC
Randall Bargelt , NDA
Sandy Cumming, HIE

In Attendance: Jon Philips, NDA
Gordon Cox, CRP
Ian Hargrave, THC
Roy Kirk, CRP
Carroll Buxton, HIE
Eilidh Gunn, CRP (minutes)

Apologies: Greg Allan, Scottish Government

1. Minute of Executive board Meeting held on 14th December 2007

The minutes of the meeting of 14th December 2007 were approved.

It was noted minutes were published on the website.

2. Matters Arising

Feb 2008 Report on Berriedale Braes – This very recent report was circulated. The report suggests significant improvement possibilities at modest cost which could be made as an interim while waiting for a bigger project at Berriedale. **ACTION** Alister Dodds and Ian Hargrave will discuss with THC members, Community Councillors and Roads and Transport Department to take a view on the report.

Caithness Conference 2008 – An Energy themed conference is likely to be held with the First Minister being invited as a guest speaker. Roy Kirk has been invited to the next meeting of the organising committee.

Sir Anthony queried why the partnership had been known as Caithness Regeneration Partnership and is now using Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership. Carroll Buxton explained the remit is to cover the Dounreay travel to work area, so the name should reflect this.

3. Governance Arrangements for Advisory Board

Role and Remit:- act as a ‘parliament’ for the CRP, meeting bi-annually, receiving quarterly reports on progress and offering advice and opinion on behalf of local, regional and national interests. Expected to have a membership of around 20 including elected members, community representatives and members of organisations.

Agreed 4 members will be Councillors including THC Convener who would be chair. **ACTION** Ian Hargrave to convene a meeting with the 4 members and local organisations to take forward advisory board. First meeting of Advisory Board expected in May.

4. Permanent Programme Manager

Applications have been received and are to be shortlisted shortly, hopefully followed very swiftly by selection of suitable candidate. Interviews will be conducted by Ian Hargrave, Randall Bargelt, Carroll Buxton and possibly Sir Anthony if time allows.

John Thurso has expressed concern over a gap between the Interim and Permanent Programme Manager, it is hoped to keep this gap to a minimum.

ACTION Ian Hargrave to take forward recruitment process.

5. National Nuclear Archive

Welcomed the announcement of the £8 million investment for the county and the high skilled jobs it will bring. Also hope to encourage spin off archives not related to the nuclear industry.

6. Update from Programme Manager

Confirmed Action Plan – Snapshot 1 was released to press December 07.

Snapshot 2 reviewed and confirmed. Noted the plan contains some 50 actions. Sir Anthony suggested a revised format with prioritisation of actions not complete and removal of items deemed ‘core’ business of partners for snapshot 3. **ACTION** Permanent Programme Manager. The Advisory Board will also wish to comment on the Action Plan.

7. Update from inward Investment Executive

Energy – Welcomed the appointment of Louise Smith who is well known and respected within the county. Given the significance of marine energy it was **AGREED** that Energy should be a separate item on agenda. Also **AGREED** to invite Louise Smith to make a presentation, followed by discussion and agreement on key actions etc. **ACTION** Roy Kirk to inform Louise Smith.

The Caithness Energy Alliance conference on 6th Feb at which the first Minister spoke about the Pentland Firth generated a positive profile. Also in February, fifteen companies from various countries visited the area, these visits are being followed up. Further similar visits expected in May and September, helping to improve awareness and possible inward investment to the area.

Tourism – Working on plans for John O’ Groats, Castletown and Wick. These developments are likely to be led by the private sector.

Service sector – It is expected a positive announcement for the county will be made soon.

8. Press and PR

Recent press releases reviewed, in particular the number of stories on John O Groats and the Nuclear Archive. The importance of having the press staff in the individual partners working together was noted.

9. Any other business

The Board recorded their appreciation of the excellent contributions made by Carroll Buxton, HIE Area Director who is taking up a new appointment with HIE, and also Gordon Cox, Interim Programme Manager who is leaving HIE at the end of March.

Date of next meeting – June 2008.

Summary of Actions

Action	Due Date	Responsible Person
Review Berridale report with THC members, Community Councillors and Roads and Transport Department.	At next appropriate meeting.	Alister Dodds Ian Hargrave
Convene a meeting with the 4 members and local organisations to take forward advisory board.	First meeting of Advisory Board expected in May.	Ian Hargrave
Take forward recruitment process for permanent Programme Manager	a.s.a.p.	Ian Hargrave
Revised format for action plan snapshot 3.	June 08	Permanent Programme Manager
Invite Louise Smith to make a presentation on energy.		Roy Kirk