

CNSRP Executive Board – 14 December 2012

Minutes of meeting held at Wick John O’Groats Airport

Present: Sir Anthony Cleaver (Chair)
Anthony Standing, SDS (AS)
Nigel Lowe, NDA (NL)
Stuart Black, HC (SB)
Karen Jackson, SG (KJ)
Roy Kirk, HIE (RK)
Roger Hardy, Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd (RH)

In Attendance: Eann Sinclair, CNSRP (ES)
Eilidh Gunn, CNSRP (minutes)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Alistair Dodds (Highland Council), Alex Paterson (HIE)

2. Previous Minutes

Agreed with one amendment (comment attributed to NL, page 1, final paragraph) and one addition (AP suggestion re MTRC programme, page 3, 2nd paragraph).

3. Matters Arising

Updates on previous actions:

- Meeting of tourism staff still under discussion. HIE will produce paper for next meeting. **ACTION (1) RK**
- NHI presentation will be at the March 2013 EB meeting.
- Chairman wrote to HMRC and received holding response. Cllr Drew Hendry wrote and has yet to receive a response. Highland Council offer of office space to enable ongoing HMRC presence was made during initial responses in 2008/09.
- Joint Executive and Advisory Board meeting is planned for June 2013.
- Communications - ES has been working with DSRL to produce a ‘This Is Caithness’ insert for local press. Discussion that this could also be targeted to a wider audience.

4. Issues from CNSRP Advisory Board, 30th November 2012

Main discussions were around skills development. It was agreed that sector-based skills “academies” (such as the one established at Nigg with Global Energy) offered a useful model to support both existing company growth and inward investment, particularly with the excellent support infrastructure available in Caithness. ES outlined ongoing discussions between SDS, Job Centre Plus, Highland Council, North Highland College and Caithness Chamber on this issue.

It was agreed that “talent attraction” should appear in the updated CNS inward investment marketing plan currently being revised. **ACTION (2) RK**

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AS agreed that SDS would coordinate the development of a skills development programme to support both existing company growth and inward investment in the north. **ACTION (3) AS.**

AS will also provide update at next meeting on a Regional Skills Investment Plan being developed jointly by HIE and SDS. **ACTION (4) AS**

5. Inward Investment Update

RK outlined progress, with recent inward investments such as Natural Retreats, Wolfburn Distillery and the Thurso Cinema. A number of existing investors are considering further investment. RK said that during 2013 there could be investments in the area by companies engaged in marine and offshore renewable energy development. However, these investments will be dependent upon the outcome of applications to Marine Scotland for consent.

Scrabster Harbour Trust's phase 1 development will be complete shortly. Progress with the development of the site designated as an Enterprise Area was discussed. **ACTION (5) ES** to send a letter to Scrabster Harbour Trust (SHT) offering assistance to help progress the Enterprise Area and inviting a representative from SHT to an Executive Board meeting.

Comments

- SB said that SCDI used to hold dinners in London with investors, and that this would be worth discussing. **ACTION (6) SB** to pass SCDI details to RK.
- Journalists (freelance, trade press and national press) can be attracted to the area to write articles on specific topics relevant to the Partnership's key priorities. **ACTION (7) ALL** pass any contacts to RK.
- HIE are discussing improvements to the "Caithness Ambassadors" project. **ACTION (8) ES** circulate list of current members with a view to receiving further suggestions for ambassadors.
- The Caithness & North Sutherland Inward Investment Marketing Plan is being revised, and this will also indicate relevant events and conferences that could be held in the area (such as the recent UHI Peatlands conference). **ACTION (9) SB** to pass on contact for Moira Unwin, VisitScotland, regarding conference funding. **ACTION (10) All** send conference topic ideas to RK.
- **ACTION (11) ES** Approach key companies re potential for area profile raising via well-known guests.

6. Programme Manager Update

- Project Level Priorities Update
 - o The EB agreed that an initial 5 priority projects would be identified for joint support over the coming year. **ACTION (12) ES** to circulate list of projects including summary description. The projects to be led and coordinated at Delivery Group, with quarterly reporting of progress to Executive Board. ES will also manage a pipeline of other projects to ensure awareness of ongoing development opportunities.
 - o **ACTION (13) HIE & NDA** meet to discuss short-term funding requirement for Wick Harbour Authority and agree a project lead –

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reporting back at next meeting. RH also confirmed that Babcock had offered WHA support with project management.

- Communications update.
 - o The CNSRP Communications Plan will be refreshed in January 2013 with key messages for 2013/2014. **ACTION (14) ES** to build 12 month rolling programme of communications. **ACTION (15) All** to alert ES to upcoming press opportunities.
 - o A CNSRP 2012/13 summary report will be prepared. **ACTION (16) ES** to circulate a draft when prepared

7. Any other business

The Chairman welcomed NDA's announcement that the National Nuclear Archive project (including the North Highland Archive) will proceed to the next phase of work. Current NDA plans indicate that a commercial partner for the project will be appointed by mid-2013 and the facility will be operational in early 2016.

Summary of Actions

Ref:	Action:	Due Date:	Lead:
1	Produce paper on tourism issues.	Next meeting	RK
2	Include skills attraction in the updated CNS marketing plan.	Next meeting	RK
3	Coordination of skills development support	Next meeting	AS
4	Provide update on Regional skills investment plan.	Next meeting	AS
5	Send letter to Scrabster Trust offering assistance with the Enterprise Area and inviting to an EB meeting.	Next meeting.	ES
6	Pass details to RK re SCDI investors dinners.	21 Dec 2012	SB
7	Pass any contacts for freelance, trade journalists to RK.	Ongoing	All
8	Circulate Caithness Ambassadors list to all, suggestions to increase the number of ambassadors are welcome.	21 Dec 12	ES
9	Pass details for Moira Unwin, VS who holds conference funds to RK.	21 Dec 12	SB
10	Send conference ideas to RK.		All
11	HIE & NDA meet to discuss Wick funding and agree a project lead - report at next EB.	21 Dec 12	HIE & NDA
12	Circulate list of 5 priority projects for agreement.	24 Dec 12	ES
13	Approach key companies re potential for area profile raising via well-known guests.	22 Jan 13	ES
14	Build 12 month rolling programme of communications.	20 Feb 13	ES
15	Alert ES to upcoming press opportunities	08 Feb 13	All
16	Circulate draft of CNSRP 2012/13 Summary Report	20 Feb 13	ES