

Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership

**Executive Board meeting, Tollemache House, Thurso
18th June 2014**

Present: Sir Anthony Cleaver (Chair)
Nigel Lowe, NDA (NL)
Simon Middlemas (DSRL/ PBO)
Seonag Campbell, SDS (SC)
Roy Kirk, HIE (RK)
Stuart Black, Highland Council (SB)
Karen Jackson, Scottish Government (KJ)

Apologies: Roger Hardy, DSRL
Alex Paterson, HIE
Anthony Standing, SDS
Steve Barron, THC

In Attendance: Eann Sinclair, CNSRP (ES)

1 Welcome

2 Previous Minutes/ Matters Arising

Previous minutes (25th March 2014) agreed.

Matters arising –

Inward Investment Resource

ES confirmed that he had discussed with R Kirk the issue of resource for inward investment activities. Rather than focusing on additional staff resource, discussions had centred on an enhanced process of moving companies from initial engagement and expression of interest to detailed case handling and due diligence. R. Kirk confirmed that this approach was an important step forward, and it was agreed that that the action could be closed out.

Skills action

ES reported ongoing discussion with Caithness Chamber of Commerce and CNSRP partners regarding potential initiative to address skills needs. Skills action will also form one of the major projects in the CNSRP programme being developed.

3 Issues from joint Executive/ Advisory Board meeting

The issue of resource devoted to communicating progress with CNSRP activities was raised. Advisory Board members felt that whilst a positive message was being communicated externally, further work could be done to better communicate progress to local audiences. It was agreed that a review of the communications resources of the CNSRP partners would be undertaken to identify if there is an opportunity to enhance the CNSRP communications effort, and perhaps to learn lessons from communications staff experience. **ACTION 1 – ES** to commission a review of partner communications capacities.

4 Programme Manager Update

CNSRP Programme

S. Middlemas presented a short update on joint work with E Sinclair. This had been discussed at the Advisory Board meeting that morning, and it was agreed that a further update on progress would be given to Advisory Board in September, with a view to a developed programme plan being available by December. Members agreed with the process outlined, and agreed to a final presentation in December.

ACTION 2: ES to ensure interim and final presentations to both Boards in September and December respectively.

Programme Manager report:

The written report was presented. ES highlighted the good work recently completed to support the new ownerships at AGM Batteries and ABSL Power Solutions, with the securing of 30 jobs and likely creation of further jobs. He also highlighted continued good progress with inward investment, having taken part with RK in productive meetings in Aberdeen last week: two companies in particular are now in advanced discussions regarding new facilities in Caithness. R Kirk confirmed that he hoped at least one of the companies would be in a position to announce their new Caithness base in time for the visit of the Scottish Cabinet in July.

Communications:

The updated media coverage table was noted, and discussed in the context of the action agreed on a review of communications across CNSRP partners. It was agreed that following the joint Executive/ Advisory Boards meeting a press release would be drafted to highlight the range of current and planned work to develop the skills of the area’s current and future workforce. **ACTION 3 – ES** to draft press release.

6 Any other business

Next Executive board meeting now confirmed as Friday 3rd October, Highland Council Committee Room 1, Inverness, 12pm-2pm.

Summary of Actions

	Action:	Due Date:	Responsible:
1	commission a review of partner communications capacities	Next meeting	ES
2	ensure interim and final presentations on Programme plans to both Boards in September and December respectively	Next meeting	ES
3	draft press release on Executive/ Advisory Board discussions	27/06/2014	ES