

**Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership  
Minutes of CNSRP Advisory Board (DRAFT)  
12<sup>th</sup> June 2009  
Caithness Horizons, Thurso**

Present:

Cllr. Sandy Park (Chairman); Stuart Black (THC); Ian Hargrave (THC); John Green (Caithness Partnership); William Manson (Assoc. of Caithness community Councils); Peter Body (Caithness Chamber of Commerce); Louise Smith (HIE); Duncan Mackay (The Crown Estate); Frances Gunn (Federation of North Coast Community Councils); Roy Kirk (HIE); Derek Milnes (Thurso & Wick Trades Council); Simon Middlemas (DSRL); Rev Ronnie Johnston (DSG); Cllr Katrina MacNab (THC); Eann Sinclair (CNSRP); Iona Gunn (CNSRP - minutes)

1. Apologies:

John Thurso MP, Willie Watt (Wick Harbour Authority), Ian Clark (Thurso & Wick Trades Council); Cllr. Ian Ross (THC), Cllr David Flear (THC).

2. Previous Minutes:

Approved as submitted.

3. Matters Arising from previous meeting

The Chairman welcomed members and said that this was the first meeting since the passing of former Advisory Board member George Bruce, who would be a sad loss not only to the Partnership but also to the wider Caithness community.

The Chairman pointed out that it was a year almost to the day since the board first met. He felt it was a worthwhile grouping, and that it is important that this group is getting stronger. Frances Gunn agreed that the group is finding its feet. Simon Middlemas emphasised the need to get more information to the public, as they don't know what the Partnership is doing.

Rev. Ronnie Johnstone felt that the group's discussions benefited from the press not being present, as many members felt that when press are present the group can't talk freely.

It was agreed that the Partnership needed a more substantial communications resource. ES agreed to communicate this to the Executive Board when it met on 16<sup>th</sup> June. **ACTION 1:** E Sinclair to brief Executive Board.

Pentland Firth issues had been taken up at the Executive Board in March, and are being acted upon. The issues will be covered in the presentation later on the Agenda. E Sinclair confirmed that the draft workplans had been circulated. Wick River pier: this has been discussed, and the view is that it should be part of the wider regeneration of Wick harbour following completion of the Marina project. E Sinclair to follow up with S Black at Highland Council and with Wick Harbour Authority. **ACTION 2:** E Sinclair to follow up with THC and WHA.

National Nuclear Archive: S Middlemas confirmed that DSRL would be taking this project forward. A project manager would be in post by July and would properly scope the project.

Moderator's Visit: E Sinclair had drafted a list of potential visits and would pass to R. Johnstone for comment. **ACTION 3**: E Sinclair to pass list to R. Johnstone.

Caithness Horizons DVD: E Sinclair confirmed that this was now available for use, and passed out copies to members. The DVD had been used by Caithness Chamber of Commerce at All-Energy in Aberdeen in May.

Sutherland Summit: F Gunn said it had been postponed until 14<sup>th</sup> of September and invitations will be going out. Jim Mather MSP & Rosanna Cunningham MSP will do workshop and mind mapping sessions with participants.

#### 4. Update Report

Members had been circulated an update paper on progress with a range of partner projects. Responding to comments ES agreed to build in a short summary at the start of the document to highlight key issues for members. **ACTION 4**: ES to implement for next update report.

He also said that he will be issuing an invitation to members to participate in a workshop in early July to begin creating a Vision Document for the area. This would be an important tool as large multinational companies come into the area through the imminent Dounreay PBO Competition and the Pentland Firth marine energy project. **ACTION 5**: E Sinclair to circulate invite to members.

S Black highlighted recent work on the Scottish Government's town centre regeneration fund. Two bids have been submitted, with decisions expected around July 30<sup>th</sup>. The Chairman remarked on the positive difference the work to Thurso precinct had made.

R Kirk had written to the Chairman with an update on additional funds so far committed by HIE. The letter was handed out to members. R Kirk explained that £1.6 million had been committed last year, and this figure had now increased to just under £5 million. He pointed out that the original timescale for committing the additional funding was three years, but that HIE was not going to be constrained by that original time limit. The main priority at present is to help develop projects to bring forward.

Rev R Johnston questioned why the meeting was being informed about things that had happened rather than being asked for advice. It was agreed that the Advisory Board's continuing role was to provide advice and feedback to the Executive Board. ES pointed out that this had happened after the last Advisory Board Meeting, and that the direct result was the presence of Duncan Mackay and Louise Smith to present on the Pentland Firth project.

Frances Gunn pointed out that the CNSRP newsletters don't include anything from north Sutherland, and therefore people from North Sutherland don't feel included.

S Black emphasised the view that the Advisory Board's role was valuable, but suggested that it was also useful for members to feed back views to their own constituent groups, and to come prepared to these meetings with feedback from their own organisations. ES agreed to add an Agenda item for future meetings for "Feedback from member groups" **ACTION 6:** ES to add to next agenda.

Progress with the Action Plan was discussed. There was concern that the Plan needed to remain focused, and that the public needed to see the programme lying behind the Plan. S. Black also thought that there was a better way of indicating progress (or lack of progress). A "traffic light" system of indicating progress was suggested. ES agreed to implement such a system for the next version of the Action Plan. **ACTION 7:** Es to implement for next Action Plan

#### 5. Presentation on the Pentland Firth Marine Energy project

The Chairman introduced the presentations from Louise Smith and Duncan Mackay on the Pentland Firth Marine Energy project. (The presentation is available to download at [www.cnsrp.org.uk/downloads](http://www.cnsrp.org.uk/downloads))

Members agreed that the presentation was excellent, and clarified a number of current and future issues facing the project. Simon Middlemas said he would like more detail on developers' requirements as we need to know how to take forward harbour infrastructure etc. Duncan acknowledged this and said that all the project partners were working to understand developers needs. These will be communicated as soon as possible. **ACTION 8:** L Smith & D Mackay to pass on information as it becomes available.

#### Dates of Next Meetings:

Set for **Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009**, venue to be confirmed.

(Final Board meeting of the year will be on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November, venue to be confirmed.)

#### Summary of Agreed Actions:

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Responsible Person</b>
1	Brief Executive Board re communications resource	16 <sup>th</sup> June	E. Sinclair
2	Follow up Wick River pier issue	31 <sup>st</sup> August.	E. Sinclair with THC and WHT
3	Pass list of potential visits to R. Johnstone	ASAP	E. Sinclair
4	Put in summary to highlight key issues on the update report.	For next update report	E. Sinclair
5	Circulate workshop invite to members.	ASAP	E. Sinclair

6	Add agenda item – feedback from member groups	31 <sup>st</sup> August	E. Sinclair
7	Implement traffic light system on the action plan	31 <sup>st</sup> August	E. Sinclair
8	Developers needs to be communicated	ASAP	L. Smith & D. Mackay