

Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership

Executive Board meeting, Highland Council, Inverness 25th March 2014

Present: Sir Anthony Cleaver (Chair)
Nigel Lowe, NDA (NL)
Mark Rouse (DSRL/ PBO)
Seonag Campbell, SDS (SC)
Roy Kirk, HIE (RK)
Steve Barron, Highland Council (SB)

Apologies: Roger Hardy, DSRL
Alex Paterson, HIE
Anthony Standing, SDS
Karen Jackson, Scottish Government

In Attendance: Eann Sinclair, CNSRP (ES)

1 Welcome

2 Previous Minutes/ Matters Arising

Previous minutes (10/12/13) agreed.

Wick JOG Airport

ES reported that an options study on energy market opportunities had been tendered, but was now being re-tendered following no tender responses. Forthcoming potential announcements in the energy (tidal, offshore wind, oil & gas) sector were also discussed.

Skills action

ES reported ongoing discussion with Caithness Chamber of Commerce and CNSRP partners regarding potential initiative to address skills needs.

3 Issues from Advisory Board meeting, 18th March

Enabling activities

ES presented forward plans to CNSRP Advisory Board. There was general agreement on the proposed enabling activities, and a desire to see timelines for each activity. ES is now working with leads for each activity to develop timelines.

Inward investment resource

CNSRP Advisory Board also received an update on inward investment from HIE. The range and level of interest from companies was welcomed, but questions were asked about the potential need for further (human) resource to deliver investment deals. After discussion ES agreed to scope requirements for consideration. **ACTION 1** – ES to scope potential additional inward investment resources.

4 Programme Manager Update

Priority projects

The Chairman reported that he had met the chair and chief executive of Atlantis Resources, and welcomed the progress being made on their tidal energy plans both as a technology developer and as owner of Meygen. It was agreed that the chair would communicate CNSRP support for the company's plans, and to offer support to help maximise economic opportunities for Caithness and North Sutherland.

R Kirk outlined progress in attracting inward investment to the area. IT was agreed that an effective marketing plan was required to support this effort. E Sinclair agreed to forward the final version of the marketing plan.

CNSRP 2011-14 progress v. targets & 2014-17 targets

E Sinclair presented an update on 2011-14 jobs targets. The figures were welcomed as encouraging in terms of the sectoral spread and in terms of the positive picture it highlighted of local company growth over the period. The figures highlighted the work still to be done in attracting inward investment. It was also agreed that there needed to be an ongoing focus on maintaining/ growing average wage levels in the area.

Communications

E Sinclair presented a table of media coverage during the past financial year. This highlighted steady coverage in local/ regional press, helping communicate key CNSRP messages. N. Lowe highlighted the opportunities to gain positive coverage in more specialist publications. It was agreed that this should be a key element of the inward investment marketing plan.

6 Any other business

ES said that the combined Executive/ Advisory Board meeting would be held in June (date now confirmed as Wed 18th June in Wick).

Summary of Actions

	Action:	Due Date:	Responsible:
1	Scope potential additional inward investment resource	Next meeting	ES