

Moray Economic Partnership – Meeting Note

6th June 2011, Horizon, Forres

Attendees	Jim Royan (JR) – Chair, George McNeil (GMcN) – Moray Chamber of Commerce, Shane Rankin (SR) - Scottish Government, Danny Logue (DL) – Skills Development Scotland, Mike Devenney (MD) – Moray College, Andrew Anderson (AA) & Lesley Gallacher (LG) - Highlands and Islands Enterprise, George McIntyre (GMcI), Roddy Burns (RB)& Gordon Sutherland (GS)– Moray Council
Apologies	Alex Paterson (AP)

Meeting Note 17th May 2011 – Approved

Update from the Chair –

Project Co-ordinator – Moray Council has now endorsed the appointment of GS as Moray Economic Partnership Co-ordinator. GS will be seconded from his existing post and envisages working in the role two to three days per week.

The role will be reviewed in September 2011, however, should issues arise prior to that review they will be raised and addressed as necessary.

Terms of Reference – JR has met with SR and Alistair Merrill – Scottish Government, to discuss Terms of Reference and will bring a paper to the Board meeting on 14th July 2011 for discussion and when appropriate, approval.

Provisional Economic Development Programme June 2011 - May 2012

RB led the Board through the document. GS suggested utilising the Moray Council Red, Amber, Green timeline reporting system to monitor progress, the Board agreed. It was also agreed that RB's plan would act as the strategic document and the Delivery Team Routeway would be the Action plan to ensure activity is carried out, in order to meet strategic priorities.

Communities:- It was acknowledged that it is essential to establish a strong level of community engagement. There is an urgent need to let the wider Moray Community know what the Board is doing and why. To facilitate this it was suggested identifying some early successes that can be highlighted. SR suggested using the Delivery Team Routeway as a method of doing this.

RB to draft a community consultation paper for discussion at the next meeting .

Inward Investment: - AA gave an update on some positive activities which are underway with the HIE teams. Full details to follow.

Business Gateway (BG):- The role and potential expansion of BG services was discussed. GS suggested looking at a partnership approach to bidding for ESF funding for an expansion of services – potential partners are Skills Development Scotland, Jobcentre Plus & Moray College. GS will co-ordinate a meeting with partners and take forward a partnership bid. SR confirmed that Programme Monitoring Committee has set aside money for projects but a straight forward Business Gateway proposal may not be eligible. GS will follow up.

DL and GMcN will discuss how the Chamber can facilitate the promotion of the SDS offer to employers.

Tourism:- GMcN sits on the Moray Tourism Development Group and confirmed that they are receiving support from Dr Cantlay. GMcN will continue to act as a link between the MTD & MEP boards. GMcN did state that momentum within the group has been lost a little while MTD waits to hear about their funding bid from HIE. AA will feed back to AP as the HIE Board representative.

Enterprise Zone:- Currently featuring highly with the Scottish Government. SR confirmed that there have been requests from a number of areas. GS will contact Peter Ford at Scottish Govt and seek clarity the information they need. The Scottish Govt is still deciding how to organise and award enterprise area status.

It was suggested that JR & GMcI arrange meetings with key business groups such as Federation of Small Businesses, Elgin BID and Lossie Task Group to seek views and keep them informed.

Regional Sports Facilities:- There was discussion about the possibility of using RAF Kinloss sports facilities to provide a regional sports resource. SR is in discussions next week about bases and it would be useful if he has a 1 page brief outlining opportunities which he could present/refer to. RB, GS, Calum McPherson and AA are to prepare one as a matter of urgency. AA will check on the progress of a report being prepared by 2 graduates on behalf of SDI which may provide valuable background information.

Infrastructure: - Transport will be referred to later in the minute. Waste management, the Councils plans to address this issue should lead to the creation on new jobs. RB also mentioned that there is the possibility that the Council will start to offer shop and office premises. RB is keen that the MEP Board at a strategic level endorse this.

Skills :- DL expressed a desire for the public agencies to align their services, after some discussion it was agreed to set up a Skills & Training Group. GS will lead on this and get help from DL, MD and others as required. The group will look at the public sector offer to individuals and employers and how it can be strengthened or improved; if appropriate the group will prepare an ESF bid for funding. SR mentioned the possibility of looking at a project as pilot as this could bring advantages. MD also mentioned the importance of a public/private approach to activities. There was also discussion about the importance of identifying sectors for the future. DL has to provide GS with SDS key sectors information.

Delivery Group:- GS keen to see the delivery group continue and provide the operational element of the MEP Board strategy. GS identified the need to formalise the Delivery Group and will act as the link between the MEP Board and the Delivery Team. RB will make reference to the Delivery Team when he is drafting the governance paper for the next meeting.

Moray Economic Strategy & Elgin City Region for the Future

Updated papers will continue to be sent to Board members so they are able to familiarise themselves in preparation for Council approval.

Areas for Transport Investment in Moray

There was discussion about the desire to develop direct links to central Scotland, via a bus link to Aviemore. This could potentially be an easy win and provide positive PR. The Transport Investment Plan which was submitted to Scottish Transport in February, RB will check how this should be progressed.

Following discussions about all of the above documents it was agreed that it is important that the documents do not show Moray in isolation, rather the papers should highlight the need to work with our neighbours and reflect the wider regional context.

Communication Update

LG confirmed that the Board were happy with the Communication plan circulated. LG will prepare a calendar of media releases, highlighting the establishment of the Board, key messages and activities. LG will also work on the development of a web site so information can be housed and displayed in a central point.

LG, MD and SR will look at developing a press release about the Life Sciences centre which will bring highlight the project and should bring some positive PR.

Mike Collins from the Northern Scot is going to prepare an article re the establishment of the Board, for the paper this week, JR to meet and speak to him, LG will provide background papers.

There is the possibility of a Ministerial Visit on Monday 20th May 2011, by Fergus Ewing the new Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism. JR and GMCl will lead on this. The visit is still to be confirmed but it was agreed that if possible it would be a good opportunity to showcase Moray projects as well as the work of the Board. For consideration:-

- The life Sciences Project
- The Biomass project at Rothes
- Bill Ruck – winner of the Moray Chamber of Commerce - What's the Big Idea competition.

It was suggested that JR and GS use the opportunity to mention the Transport Investment Plan and seek Ministerial support. Once the visit is confirmed LG will prepare a media brief which will be widely circulated. RB has an information paper originally prepared by SR he will update it and pass it onto Lesley.

AOCB

- JR will attend or provide a paper to be presented to the Community Planning Board on the 7th July.
- GS attended an event where Tim Smith, Chair of the Aberdeen City & Shire Economic Group spoke, it was agreed to invite him to speak at a future meeting. Once dates are agreed GS will invite him.

Action Points

- RB to draft a community consultation paper and feed it back to Jim.
- GS will investigate possibilities for an ESF partnership funding bid
- LG, MD & SR to review Life Sciences centre press release
- DL and GMcN will discuss how the Chamber can facilitate the promotion of the SDS offer to employers
- AA to advice AP of the concerns from Moray Tourism Development re funding
- GS will contact Peter Ford re Enterprise Zoning
- JR & GMCl should arrange meetings with key business groups
- RB, GS, Calum MacPherson and AA are to prepare a brief for Shane on Regional Sports facility
- AA to check on the progress on graduate report into use of base buildings
- DL has to provide GS with SDS key sectors information.
- LG to prepare a calendar of media releases
- SR to identify the contact within the Ministers office who would be the link to LG
- RB to pass information paper to Lesley
- MD & DL to agree format of presentations at meeting on 14th July

Future meetings :-Thursday 14th July – 1.30pm – 3.30pm venue – Moray College – short presentations on Life sciences and services of Skills Development Scotland