

DRAFT – Moray Economic Partnership – Meeting Note 17th April 2013, Officers Mess, RAF Lossiemouth

Attendees	Richard Hartland (RH) – Chair; Mike Devenney (MD) – Moray College; David Oxley (DO) & Lesley Gallagher (LG) – Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Fiona Murdoch (FM); John Cowe (JC); Gordon Sutherland (GS) & Shelley Flett (SF) – Moray Council; Margery McLennan (MM) – Moray Chamber of Commerce; Anthony Standing (AS) – Skills Development Scotland; JJ Johnston (JJ) – Moray Business Forum Allan Wright & Graham Leadbitter – Moray Council and Ian Marshall & Sean Orr – RAF Lossiemouth also observed the meeting.
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1. Welcome From Host

Ian Gale, Station Commander at RAF Lossiemouth welcomed the MEP meeting to the Officers Mess. He explained to the group that the personnel at RAF Lossiemouth, of which there are around 2,500, now have a timeline for the typhoon moving to Lossiemouth and that there will eventually be 3 typhoon squadrons. The Station Commander further explained that preparation is in hand to equip the station to provide the nations 24/7 rapid reaction function.

2. Welcome From Chair

RH welcomed John Cowe and JJ Johnston to their first meeting of the Moray Economic Partnership and also welcomed Councillors Graham Leadbitter and Allan Wright as observers to the meeting. Following introductions from everyone around the table, RH explained that he would be chairing the meeting on an interim basis and possibly only for 1 meeting.

3. Apologies: Andrew Fowlie, NHS; George McNeil, Chamber of Commerce; and Randal Robertson, HITRANS

4. Meeting Note 17th April 2013

Subject to noting that the action for GS, AF & DO to meet to discuss the consortium group and European funding along with Reni Milburn, the meeting note of the 17th April 2013 was approved.

5. Chairman's Update

Since the last meeting the Chair had the following updates:

- RH will be attending another SCDI dinner, these are proving very useful for networking
- RH & DO met with Highlands and Islands Renewables and got a briefing from the Chief Executive that the Crown Estate will drive the timing of the offshore industry
- Further meetings have and will take place regarding Buckie Harbour with the civil servants visiting next month. The proposal for what is to happen with Buckie Harbour is currently confidential.

- Following a query from MD – RH agreed to provide further information on this project as soon as was possible due to the confidential nature.
 - Following a query from MM it was clarified that Jacobs, the consultancy company employed to look at Buckie Harbour have been charged with reviewing previous information as well as looking forward. It was noted that the Chamber of Commerce would like to be consulted on the emerging Buckie Harbour proposals at the earliest opportunity and kept involved.
- The Building Standards team recently met with the Wm Grant and the National Building Standards team as Moray was being pressured as it was perceived to be dealing with compliance issues differently to North Ayrshire. Following investigation it turned out that they were very different issues.
 - The recent opening of the cogen plant at Rothes by Prince Charles, attended by the Chief Executive of Moray Council, was recognised as a significant success for Moray.
 - RH updated the Group that Performance Indicators in planning had been the second worst in Scotland but they have now risen to 71% of applications being dealt with in the statutory timescale which puts Moray above the National average.
 - Moray Council has invested £5,000 to support the promotion of Moray SMEs at the Royal Highland Show
 - RH met with Sandy Adam of Springfield regarding the Barmuckity site. Discussions have been had around the landscaping of the site as it will be the first thing people see when coming into Elgin from the east so needs to look good. Springfield is currently concerned about the extent of traffic assessments and associated off site junction improvements that will be required as part of development applications and RH has a meeting next month with Transport Scotland to discuss this.
 - Following some of the one to one sessions Jim Royan had held with members of the MEP, RH summed up some of the main points and themes which emerged:
 - There is a growing confidence with openness and respect
 - There are improving relationships with planning
 - The Moray Economic Partnership is now recognised as part of a Broader Highland approach
 - There is a need to develop outcomes
 - Things need to always be relevant to business
 - There is now better cross boundary working
 - There is better equality across the partnership
 - There needs to be a transfer of knowledge
 - The group needs to demonstrate success
 - There is a need to be aware of complacency
 - RH has been invited along to the Moray Business Women's dinner
 - RH is giving a presentation to the Builders Federation who want to talk about procurement so a procurement officer will also accompany him
 - RH and AW are attending a Renewables dinner on Sunday evening hosted by Fergus Ewing
 - While the Council management team are reflecting on the Best Value audit, consideration will need to be given to governance arrangements around the MEP

6. Update from Gordon Sutherland

- Allane Hay, a mature student is doing her dissertation on the Moray Economic Partnership and wants to focus on leadership and whether it is different between the public and private sectors so will be hoping to meet with some of the members in the coming months
- One to one meetings with members of the business forum regarding promoting Moray are progressing and approx 40% complete.
- The Moray Business Forum met in March to provide feedback for a feasibility study which is being carried out for the Moray Employability Action Group and the MEP to create a one stop employability shop
- The Improvement Service held a workshop with 1st, 2nd and 3rd tier managers in the Council, an action plan arising from this is being prepared
- The Improvement Service gave a presentation to the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee highlighting the Council's role in Economic Development, they have also offered to host a master class for Elected Members
- GS, RH and Jim Grant met with Scottish and Southern Energy regarding the possibility of providing community benefits for the construction of the converter station at Blackhillock, Keith. There is not much scope for financial contribution but SSE acknowledged possibilities to build on existing skills and training initiatives for the employment of engineers
- GS attended the annual all energy overview run by Oil and Gas UK & Aberdeen University where it was clarified that if oil and gas prices remain high it will be economic to extract hydrocarbons from more difficult fields in the continental shelf and as such there will be continued employment opportunities in the oil and gas industry for the next 30 years. Additionally post 2014 decommissioning of more than 300 operational fields will be a source of employment for many years. . Speakers highlighted the as yet untapped potential to commercialise the pilot technologies to be used to capture the wave and tidal energy that can be generated from the tidal stream in the Pentland Firth, and from wave resources off the Western Isles, West Orkney and Shetland. GS suggested the opportunities for Moray business to exploit this should be investigated. DO explained that if investigating this, then go to European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC) in Orkney as they are currently leading in this field.
- Following the basing review, need to explore opportunities for any unused capacity at Kinloss GS has renewed inquiries with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation
- There has been a recent, well attended funding information day. This should hopefully mean that local groups will pick up on some funding opportunities.
- Council staff will be meeting with Highland Council and Highland Opportunities to investigate the possibility of a Moray Loan Fund for SMEs
- Further to the recommendations from the FSB micro business survey, funding has been allocated to provide advice across the Highlands and Moray to SMEs to help them get over the hurdles of recruitment. A part time advisor will be employed in Moray for the next 12 months

7. Communications Update

A number of conversations were held around the need for a dedicated marketing and communications post in relation to the Moray Economic Partnership.

- It is felt there is a need to get businesses to join up and look at recruiting together, coupled with the need to attract people with skills, young people and people who have moved away, this has a direct link with the need for the communications post
- GS advised that the intention was to finish the scoping exercise, with help from LG and Peter Jones in the next few weeks and then go out to tender, Individual discussions are ongoing with business forum members to explore how they might be able to contribute and in the interim GS recommended continuing to put the service out to tender with the expectation that the winning contractor draws in contributions from the business community. In response to a question about the timescale for getting someone in post, it was suggested to explore buying in an interim service. GS advised that it wouldn't be before the end of the summer. it was suggested to explore buying in an interim service GS advised public agencies would need to go through a tender process to do this and therefore this would be no quicker unless the Chamber of Commerce was to employ the provider.
- DO advised that LG is getting a lot of pressure from HIE to return to her 'day job' and that this would likely be her last meeting.
- LG explained to the group that there needs to be a clear understanding of the communications and what the bigger picture is, while remembering the shared ambition for Moray and not simply focus on individual areas
- Following a suggestion from AS regarding ACSEF having "The Big Partnership", LG confirmed that this would be a sensible option to explore in terms of the communication needs.
- RH – explained that the while the groups are looking at their priorities, he is keen to hone these to what we can deliver immediately and in the short term
- GS will co-ordinate the co-horts and come back with the absolute priorities.
- RH further highlighted the need to clarify the priorities in order to ensure that publicity is not being given to actions that cannot be delivered.

ACTION – DO and AS to take forward the recruiting together action

ACTION – GS will contact ACSEF and make enquiries re services provided by "The Big Partnership"

ACTION – A reference group will be formed consisting of GS, LG, JJ & AS who will meet as necessary and with a degree of priority to sign off on the scope for services work through the tasks required to put a proposal out to tender.

8. Priorities

In response to a question from FM about whether all groups have set their priorities, GS replied that yes they had but that along with SF he still needed to go through all of the priorities and tidy them up, ensuring there is no duplication. He further advised that the programme managers need to start meeting on a 4-6 weekly basis initially to embed closer working and coordination and address any cross cutting issues.

RH asked to see the refined list of priorities as soon as possible

ACTION Refined list to be reported to next meeting June 4- GS to pursue with programme managers

9. Update from James Johnston

JJ outlined his new role as chair of the Business Forum working directly and indirectly with the MEP. The following narrative was provided by JJ:

I felt both privileged and delighted to be invited to take up the Chair of the Moray Strategic Regional Business Forum (SBRF), and for a number of reasons. Firstly I believed that my time in formally helping take Moray forward was over when I surrendered my role of Station Commander RAF Kinloss – a role I very much enjoyed; and secondly the chance to continue to make a difference for the future of Moray. We have such a special Region that offers so many unique opportunities whether it be Business, Tourism, education, trained resource, facilities or great food and drink – the list is illustrative rather than exhaustive. And Business within the Region has every reason to exploit the opportunities it has, making Business more effective, resilient and ultimately efficient. But there has to be a purpose and that ultimately must be the delivery of diversification of the Region - the aim of which is to develop a long term resilience and enduring legacy for the Peoples of Moray – genuinely learning the lessons of 2010 and economic shock. Key to that success is the relationship enjoyed between the Public and Private Sectors; whilst they can exist apart, genuine collaboration can only but bring strength to the Region that sets it apart from other parts of Scotland and the UK. The Business Forum exists to represent the Private Sector, delivering one voice and a conduit through which to engage in many fora. But the SBRF must support the work of the MEP, both directly and indirectly, aligning with a central, coherent and focussed view on next steps as detailed in the Moray Economic Strategy (MES). And we will do this through the adoption of the right behaviours and cultures that afford the development of a genuinely collaborative business environment and the promotion of the Moray Region, irrespective of sector, enterprise and advantage.

The SBRF will look to positively engage with not only the MEP, but all necessary stakeholders and organisations through: a collaborative approach; a shared understanding of the economic landscape; good governance; strategic leadership. There is a lot to be done over the next 12 months, but our action will define what our successors enjoy in 12 years time; this will not be an easy journey, but it is a journey in which the SBRF believe, and one in which the Forum will play its full part.

10. Major Events

- RH asked the group to consider how Moray can get involved and realise opportunities generated by the 2014 major events (Year of Homecoming, Commonwealth Games, and Ryder Cup,
- MD added that we need to look at all the local events such as the European Pipe Band Championships and capitalise on these.
- MM informed the group that she is attending the visit Scotland expo on 18th April and papers are being prepared to promote tourism. MM further explained that she feels there is a need for a better website and that there is currently no place holding a diary of all the events that take place in Moray. Could we have a list of hotels / restaurants etc that could be used along with events to help promote businesses?
- FM advised that Greater Speyside has a very good website and asked could that be used as the tourist information resource for Moray?

11. Frequency of Reporting

In response to a question raised by RH regarding the need to clarify reporting to the Community Planning Board and partners respective organisations, AW advised that the CP Board will be holding partnerships to account and that the Chair of each

partnership will be expected to report back on achievements. GS further advised that a template for updating on programme activities has been designed and that if it is kept up to date, it can be used at any point to report progress to any required body. In response to a further question, AW advised that there is no sequence (order) of reporting that has to be followed, it is not a problem for updates to be presented to partners organisations prior to being submitted to the CP Board.

Following discussion it was agreed that the in order for the MEP to be aware of which projects are being agreed and moved forward in the partnership groups, a programme should be drawn up with the priorities mapped against it and providing a timeline (critical path) for implementation. The programme should also identify which projects won't go ahead, although this part will need to be considered in depth. The programme would identify who owns each task for measurement and include a risk assessment

12. HOT Topics

- DO – Elgin Business Park – currently working with Sandy Adam to finalise the funding. Discussions are ongoing with the legal agents and HIE.
- DO – ATOS are now in situ with the official launch to be held in the next few months. The building can hold over 200 people and is currently housing 45 so ATOS is keen to develop additional business opportunities to make use of the buildings capacity.
- AS – need to be aware of the 'people attraction' to the area. Meeting with Laurence Findlay regarding the Business into Education project. Need to ensure that both businesses and young people are aware of the modern apprenticeships. The issue around the Employability Action Group has now been resolved and this will become the Skills and Training Groups delivery group.
- MD – Life Science centre will not quite be ready for the initial 7th June deadline, existing resources are being used to add to the final product for completion mid July.
- JC – Extremely encouraged by the 'can do' attitude of the Council. Feels that the virtues of Moray are not spread enough. Pending approval of or offshore turbines in the Moray Firth, the best place to service these would be from Moray – need to capitalise on this.
- MM – As a follow up to the business submit on procurement, Moray Chamber of Commerce held a procurement meeting letting the local people know that Moray Council is open for trade with local businesses – this was well received.
- MM – would like to be kept informed and consulted on the Buckie Harbour proposals as options are explored
- MM – Chamber of Commerce had a complaint about the recent scramble event and the treatment by the police – AW advised that this has been dealt with through the Council.
- LG – As it is likely to be her last meeting, LG took the opportunity to express it had been a pleasure working with the MEP especially as everything was always so pro-active and positive. RH thanked LG for her contributions.
- GS – Given the longer term campus plans should be available in June, MD accepted the offer to outline these to the meeting in August

13. Future Meetings

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday 4 th June 2013	2.00pm	Moray Council Committee Room
Tuesday 6 th August 2013	9.30am	Moray College
Wednesday 9 th October 2013	9.30am	TBC
Tuesday 3 rd December 2013	2.00pm	TBC

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