

MINUTE OF MORAY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2014

GORDONSTOUN SCHOOL

PRESENT

Councillor John Cowe
James Johnston
Frances Webster
David Oxley
Margery McLennan
Ranald Robertson
Tom McGarry

Chair
Vice Chair

The Moray Council
Moray Strategic Business Forum
Skills Development Scotland
HIE
Moray Chamber of Commerce
Hitrans
Moray College UHI

APOLOGIES

Andrew Fowlie, NHS
Murray Ferguson, Cairngorm National Park

IN ATTENDANCE

Chris Brodie, Skills Development Scotland (in respect of item 7); Colin Munro, Mi Scotland (in respect of item 6); Steven Hutcheon, HIE; Jane Cumming and Dawn McNiven both Platform PR; Councillor Fiona Murdoch, Councillor Allan Wright, Councillor Graham Leadbitter, Jim Grant, Gordon Sutherland, Peter Jones & Shelley Lawson as clerk to the meeting all Moray Council

1. WELCOME FROM HUGH BROWN, FINANCE, GORDONSTOUN SCHOOL

Mr Hugh Brown welcomed the Moray Economic Partnership to Gordonstoun School. Mr Brown then provided an abridged financial outline of the school, explaining that the annual turnover was around £17million of which £2.7million was recycled in reduced school fees. There are currently 245 FTE staff in the school with £9million being paid on staff wages. £3million is spent ensuring that as far as possible local retailers are used, an example of which is the meat for the school coming from a local butcher in Hopeman.

Mr Brown explained that although the profile of the school nationally is very high, it is not as significant within Moray; many inhabitants of Moray are unsure where it is! Gordonstoun are working raising the profile locally, and with a view to making the school more accessible to the immediate community in terms of use for meeting rooms and functions.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Giles Hamilton, Accunostics, Murray Ferguson, Cairngorm National Park and Andrew Fowle, NHS.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTE

During discussion around the previous minute it was noted that David Oxley would circulate the matrix used by Accunostics when it chose to set up business in Moray and that a Digital Health working group has now been set up, work includes attracting business to operate from the Alexander Graham Bell Centre. In response to a question Under Item 10 of the previous minute, Mr Johnston queried whether a letter had been sent. Mr Sutherland explained that the Transportation programme group had taken this forward via e-mail rather than a formal letter and would share this with Mr Johnston.

The minute was then approved as an accurate record.

4. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The chair gave the group a list of his recent engagements:

17 October	SCDI Influences Dinner, Inverness
21 October	Cairngorm National Park Meeting with Paul Wheelhouse MSP at Boat of Garten
24 October	Burghead & Hopeman Harbour Advisory Group
30 October	Elgin BID AGM
31 October	Visit to James Jones, Forres
1 November	Opening Speech for Business Gateway Seminar at Laichmoray Hotel
5 November	One to one with Jim Royan
13 November	Meeting re Macallan Distillery Redevelopment
14 November	Royal Warrant Reception, Johnstons of Elgin
	Meeting with Lt Col Tom Marsden, Kinloss Barracks
2 December	Russian Business Delegation sponsored by Walkers of Aberlour
11 December	Meeting with Robertson Construction
16 December	Meeting with Group Captain Mark Chappell at RAF Lossiemouth
7 December	AGM Covesea Lighthouse Co Ltd
16 December	One to one with Jim Royan
17 December	BEAR Scotland Liaison Meeting – A9/A96
28 December	Meeting with Visit Scotland Scott Armstrong & Chamber of Commerce Springfield Developments
31 December	Reception at Benromach Distillery – Michael Urquhart

5. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The meeting agreed to vary the order of business and take item 8 'Moray 2023 Status Update' as the next item to allow Councillor Wright to leave and give an interview to the media about the Moray Flood Alleviation Scheme.

6. MORAY 2023 STATUS UPDATE

Councillor Wright explained to the meeting that in terms of the Moray 2023 he would like to establish clear lines of communication with how the new document complements and coheres with the Moray Economic Strategy and the Elgin City for the Future documents.

During discussion, Councillor Wright explained that both the Community Planning Board and the Moray Council have identified and re-affirmed that economic development as the number one priority for Moray-Speyside. Councillor Wright agreed to releasing the Moray 2023 document to the MEP as soon as it was available.

Following discussion, the MEP agreed to:

- (i) Receive a copy of the Moray 2023 plan following the meeting of the Community Planning Board on 20 February where it will be discussed; and
- (ii) Convene a small sub group to review the plan in line with the Moray Economic Partnership priorities and feedback to the MEP before submitting any further comments or recommendations about it to the Community Planning Board.

7. PRESENTATION FROM MI SCOTLAND

Mr Colin Munro of MI Scotland delivered a presentation explaining that as a company, they work with Local Authorities and Business Improvement Districts to operate a digital infrastructure (promoting business, events and providing other local information) that can operate on a town / area / region basis.

In response to a question around costs, Mr Munro explained that for Moray it would be approximately £30,000 per year and this would be an 'all in' price, including compensating digital ambassadors to get business to use the infrastructure, there would also be an option to have a package that doesn't include this and the price for that would be around £20,000. Mr Munro explained that they do however look for a 2 year financing. Any sponsorship revenue gained would be split equally between MI Scotland and the Local Authority. He further explained that a 'tier 1 sponsorship package' would cost in the region of £5,000 - £7,000 annually.

During further discussion after Mr Munro had left, the Group agreed that they would like further information brought back on pricing and success rates. Mr Chris Brodie of Skills Development Scotland explained to the Group that the Scottish Government

has recently established town centre action funds that may be accessible in this situation. The Group agreed to research this.

8. HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS SKILLS INVESTMENT PLAN

Mr Chris Brodie, Skills Development Scotland delivered a presentation on the Highlands & Islands Skills Investment Plan. In response to a question relating to the absence of oil and agriculture in the plan, Mr Brodie explained that this had previously been highlighted at the Convention of the Highlands and Islands and that work is being done on more inclusion of these matters. Mr Brodie further acknowledged that UHI has been involved in the research of the information.

After further discussion, Mr Brodie, in explaining to the Group that the Skills Investment Plan will be used going forward, asked the Group to help prioritise what is needed locally in Moray.

When the next version of the RSIP is available it will be circulated to the Board.

9. MORAY SOCIAL ENTERPRISE STRATEGY

David Oxley explained to the Group that Moray's Social Enterprise Strategy will soon be launched and in light of this, asked the Group to consider whether tsiMoray should be invited onto the Moray Economic Partnership. This was unanimously agreed by the Group, with a further agreement that tsiMoray would be asked to give a short presentation at the next meeting.

Following this discussion, a question was raised in relation to small businesses and whether they should also be invited to sit on the Moray Economic Partnership. It was agreed that the Federation of Small Business should be invited to a future meeting to advise how it might deliver elements of the Moray Economic Strategy and how it might add value to the partnership.

10. MES PROGRAMME – INWARD INVESTMENT & BUSINESS GROWTH

David Oxley introduced the update paper from the Inward Investment & Business Growth Group explaining that there has been a number of successes which are highlighted in the paper. Mr Oxley explained that buildings suitable for businesses are improving in Moray and the development of the Elgin Business Park will aide this further. He also explained that the Alexander Graham Bell Centre is now open although the official opening won't be until June.

Jim Grant, Moray Council advised the meeting that he had met with Marine Scotland and raised the profile of Buckie. Marine Scotland is particularly interested in people leaving the RAF due to the skills that they have. Mr Oxley advised that although the meeting was successful, there is still uncertainty in relation to offshore and marine energy.

In relation to Next Generation Broadband, Mr Oxley advised the Group that the first cabinet will be switched on in Buckie during the week commencing 17 February.

11. TRAINING & GOVERNANCE

James Johnston thanked the Group for an extremely positive event on 3 December 2013 and explained that he is still to construct terms of reference for himself as Vice Chair, the Chair and Gordon Sutherland as the Officer supporting the Group. Mr Johnston welcomed the early exposure of Moray 2023 to the MEP, noting that he was pleased to see all drivers in relation to economic development consolidated into one primary document i.e. the 10 Year Plan, Elgin City of the Future etc. Of note, as Moray 2023 was to form the Economic Reference for the 'to be signed' Single Outcome Agreement, the CPP would need to provide new guidance to the Chair of the MEP regarding priorities and accountability. Following this, Mr Johnston advised that he would like to hold another session similar to the one in December but that this should be after any comments have been made in relation to the 10 Year Plan.

12. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Jane Cuming of Platform PR advised the Group that there have been a few teething problems such as needing information to be able to construct stories. Jane further advised that there needs to be some key messages agreed. During discussion, Jane advised that they are looking to develop some campaigns, one of which would be a Christmas campaign which they were seeking approval from the Group in order to take forward. This was agreed by the Group.

In response to a question from David Oxley in relation to the route of the Commonwealth relay, Peter Jones agreed to communicate with him outside of the meeting.

13. HOT TOPICS

Gordon Sutherland explained to the Group that Moray Council are looking to facilitate an Engagement event which will be held at RAF Lossiemouth towards the end of the Summer, however no firm date has been set as yet.

14. DATES FOR NOTING

The Group noted the dates in the agenda with the addition to an event being held at Moray College over the weekend of 14 – 16 July where students will be tasked with creating a video game. The winners of the event will be offered support by Hunted Cow to get their product into circulation.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Group noted that the next meeting would be on 20 May 2014 at George House Gordon and Macphail.