

# Moray Economic Partnership – Meeting Note

## 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013, Park House Business Centre, Elgin

Attendees	Jim Royan (JR) – Chair; Ranald Robertson (RR) – Hitrans; Mike Devenney (MD) – Moray College; David Oxley (DO) & Lesley Gallagher (LG) - Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Cllr Murdoch (FM); Richard Hartland (RH); Gordon Sutherland (GS) & Shelley Flett (SF) - Moray Council; George McNeil (GM) – Moray Chamber of Commerce; Andrew Fowlie (AF) – NHS Grampian; Anthony Standing (AS) – Skills Development Scotland
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1. **Apologies:** Margery McLennan – Chamber of Commerce

### 2. Introduction from Host

James Baxter, the inspiration behind the Park House Business Centre, welcomed the MEP Board to the venue and explained to the Group the purpose of the centre.

James explained that small businesses are able to rent a room to work from, or simply use the centre as a ‘front’ for their business in terms of a business address.

3. **Meeting Note 15<sup>th</sup> November 2012 approved**

### 4. Chairman’s Update

Since the last meeting the Chair had the following updates:

- JR spent some time in Canada, where he took along a prize draw to visit the area which was won by a young couple from Winnipeg. JR explained that this was a joint venture with Sutherland and Moray and was very useful, with the Moray flag being flown at the City Hall. JR explained that the trip opened his eyes to targeted tourism.
- The business breakfast held before Christmas was hosted by GM to establish the Business Forum. There was a 100% attendance rate at this event and everyone who was invited to take part in the forum has accepted. It will take time for the forum to understand the purpose.
- A working dinner is to be held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February in the Knockomie Hotel, Forres hosted by the MEP Board and inviting the Business Forum and the Community Planning Board. This will be sponsored by the Knockomie and Royans and will be a relationship building exercise. JR is meeting with Richard Scothorne in relation to another matter but will ask if he has tips on how to facilitate this event. Seating will be arranged and if anyone can’t manage to come, they should try to send a depute.

**ACTION:** Please let Shelley know if you are attending the event if you haven’t already

- JR had a helpful meeting with Michael Urquhart, Mike Ramsay and George McNeil and has invited these people to look at how the Business Forum chooses their own leader. The Community Planning Chair has approved that the leader of the Strategic Business Forum become part of the Moray Economic Partnership Board.
- JR met with Joe Lockwood, Glasgow School of Art who is doing some interesting work in Caithness at the moment. There is an appetite to participate in the Strategic Business Forum.

- Mike Ramsay of Scotland Electronics has a fascinating business. The business was originally military but it is expanding and has some very sophisticated kit. Many of us don't know what is going on in the business sector so need to understand a bit better. Mike Ramsay has 8 new employees all with salaries of £40,000 - £100,000. He has growth in his own company but is looking to also build other businesses; he further feels that the quality of life factor is becoming more important.
- The MEP Board is moving into a transition phase and JR would like to hold one to one meetings with all members over the next 4 weeks.
- Councillor Fiona Murdoch will take over as chair of this group and the new Business Forum leader will become the depute chair with an anticipation after letting things settle of 4 meetings per year.
- Shane Rankin, Scottish Government, doesn't want to lose touch with the Group but is likely to attend less.
- JR contacted all senior politicians in regard to the report card – Danny Alexander would like to be kept up to date with this which is seen as a very positive thing.
- £2.7million funding has been received to facilitate the construction of road infrastructure for Barmuckity Business Park. This will become a business and industrial park built by Springfield and will be known as “The Elgin Business Park”. This progress will give people belief in the economic strategy and we need to promote it more. Receiving funding like this is an indication of how well the Moray economic partners work together.
- £0.75million has been received from Historic Scotland for a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme for Elgin

## **5. Communications Update**

- In relation to the Barmuckity funding, LG has spoken with Peter Jones regarding what information goes out when we are able.
- Coverage – there media coverage about the tourism summit lead by Mike Devenney and the Culture and Tourism Programme Group held at the Horizon Centre on January 8 – facebook update on the day and a release.
- Need to discuss facebook and how we make the best use of social media with a responsibility on strategy groups to share information. Need to decide how widely to open this. Need to also look at the website and set it up so that it is fit for purpose. SF is the link into the CP Partnership with this. The We Heart Moray facebook page has over 2000 followers and is doing lots of really good things in promoting Moray.
- Need to bring all the business champions together for a dynamic picture and also have individual shots of the strategy groups. Feeling is that we could get national coverage on this if sold correctly. Also need to do coverage on Jim leaving and Councillor Murdoch taking over.
- The possibility of a dedicated communications post was discussed, and now that there has been some funding committed from Moray Council and HIE it was decided to pull together a sub group to investigate this further. The sub group would consist of LG, GS & RR and they would aim to present some findings at the business dinned on the 8<sup>th</sup> Feb.

## **6. Designing Healthy Communities & Life Science Commercialisation**

- AF showed a clip of digital technology and handed out some slides on why digital technology should locate in Moray (ATTACHED).

The economy of Moray will look very different in 10-20 years time, so people need to be trained in life skills.

Moray Council can help this by implementing a policy that any developments need to ensure they are broad band enabled.

## 7. HOT Topics

### a) Status Update Business Advocates for Programme Groups

GS Updated that he needs to confirm with the list of business advocates that they are still happy but he is quite confident. GS will send a message to the advocates to confirm.

### b) Business Forum Engagement with CPP

This item was discussed previously in the agenda under the chairman's update.

### c) Status Update Business Advocates for Programme Groups

AS gave an update on the Skills and Training group. He explained that there wasn't much in the economic strategy on skills but the group has picked out what it feels are the key priority areas. They see the Employability Action Group as a working group of the Skills and Training Group but this would need to be led by someone. They feel there is merit in looking at a 'one stop shop' hub for training and that getting a voice of industry into the schools would be beneficial. AS spoke to the Head Teachers meeting who are a young team and would like to see changes made to be able to move forward. The group appreciate that they will need to look at the targets they are setting and show some figures and statistics.

We need to think about how the programme groups can communicate with each other, do they need to meet up or is there a mechanism for them to share information. Need to bear in mind that any of this information could be subject to an FOI request.

### d) Status Update Marketing and Communications partners contributions

This item was dealt with earlier in the agenda under Communications Update

### e) Possible Visit Keith Brown MSP Minister for Transport and Veterans, Kinloss Barracks February / March

An announcement regarding the bases is unlikely before the end of the month. The Scottish Government has decided to put any visit on hold pending an announcement.

## 8. AOCB

- Douglas Fraser of the BBC was in Inverness on the day of the meeting and was looking to do a piece with Mike Devenney on Tourism – Jim Royan took part instead.
- RR updated that HITRANS are working with food and drink producers to make a modal shift from road to rail transport of goods and materials. Frank Roach of HITRANS will be in talks with Walkers Shortbread soon. The Lifting the

Spirit project includes the reintroduction of rail freight being moved from the mothballed depot in Elgin. HITRANS are also working with others as a priority to achieve the early delivery of a rail station, at Dalcross.

- DO noted that one of the stated outcomes of the Economic Strategy is to grow the population of Moray to 90,000 in the next 10 years – the recent release of census data shows that we are now at 93,000.
- RH raised the possibility of increasing the amount of car parking available at Beaully which RR confirmed is happening. RH is meeting with SCDI and will join their committee; he will discuss how that also represents the MES.

## 9. Future Meetings

Date	Time	Venue
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2013	9.30am	Board Room, HIE, Forres
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	9.30am	Pluscarden Abbey
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2013	2.00pm	Moray Council Committee Room
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	9.30am	Moray College
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2013	9.30am	TBC
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2013	2.00pm	TBC