

MINUTE OF MORAY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

THURSDAY 14 MAY 2015, 10:15AM – 12:15PM

PLUSCARDEN ABBEY, PLUSCARDEN, ELGIN, MORAY, IV30 8UA

Attendees

Brother Michael	Host	Pluscarden Abbey
James Johnston(JJ)	Vice Chair	The Moray Strategic Business Forum
Gordon Sutherland (GS)	MEP Coordinator	The Moray Council
Malcolm McNeil (MN)		tsiMoray
Jane Cumming (JACU)		Platform PR
Francis Webster (FW)		Skills Development Scotland(SDS)
Dawn McNiven (DM)		Platform PR
Margery McLennan (MM)		Chamber of Commerce
Tom McGarry (TM)		Moray College UHI
Ranald Robertson		Hitrans
Rhona Gunn (RG)		The Moray Council
Jim Grant (JG)		The Moray Council
David Oxley (DO)		HIE
Fiona Murdoch(FM)		Cairngorm National Park
Joanne Chisholm (mins) (JMC)	Secretary	The Moray Council

1. Welcome and Intro from Host – Brother Michael, Pluscarden Abbey

JJ welcomed everyone around the table and advised that JC sent his apologies. The very recent General Election had demonstrated the importance of detail and facts; this was a lesson that should be taken forward in delivering business. In addition to detail and facts, the matter of effective leadership and an understanding of core business were seen as key to success, and the qualities that the MEP would apply in execution of its duties.

Brother Michael was the Host for the Meeting at Pluscarden Abbey, but would not be available until later in the proceedings to provide a background and purpose to the Abbey.

The Vice Chair wished to point out that whilst Cllr Allan Wright would be more than welcome to attend occasional MEP meetings, it was important that the MEP was permitted to execute its accountable duties utilising the extant governance and in place reporting chains. Cllr Wright was requested to provide indication of when he might wish to be In Attendance at the forth coming MEP Meetings.

The Vice Chair wished to draw attention to the importance of Deputies; the MEP could only function if the prescribed membership attended, thereby representing all 3 Sectors. The MEP was all about collective strength and the ability to get both action and information out to the widest possible community.

Apologies

John Cowe (Chair), Murray Ferguson (CNPA), Fabio Villani (TSI Moray).

2. Meeting Note & Actions from meeting of 19 February 2015

DO updated MEP on the situation with Accunostics and Mackellars. Accunostics after going into administration; 30 out of 35 people have found jobs locally or in Inverness which is a positive outcome. Mackellar has been taken over but has kept jobs in Grantown on Spey.

The Vice Chair wished to thank the Business Community for its response to the demise of Accunostics; the Moray Strategic Business Forum provided great support and demonstrated that many lessons had been learnt since the drawdown of RAF Kinloss. JJ also acknowledged the very primary role of SDS, HIE and The Moray Council in addressing the situation whilst achieving a most impressive outcome.

JC & JJ had attended the launch of a new multi-media visitor experience at Speyside Cooperage on Tuesday 12 May. It has been produced by leading media professionals – Morscot - based in Moray.

After a brief discussion the Board confirmed that JACU could finalise and distribute the key messages that were distributed at the previous MEP meeting and DO has photos if required for the final product.

RG updated on page 5/6 of previous minute regarding budget. After the last MEP meeting the concerns about the feasibility of pooling budgets were discussed at the Community Planning Officers Group at which it became apparent that many partners, particularly those which operated outwith Moray, would have great difficulty in gaining authorisation to effectively hand over control of a part of a their larger budget to MEP. What was clear however was the wide support for the alignment of budgets based on particular projects. RG acknowledged that it was unfortunate that this clarity had not emerged until after the MEP meeting, but as a common view had now been expressed, the idea of working towards pooled budgets would not be further pursued at this time.

RR gave a progress update re the A95 Study which was funded by HITRANS but commissioned on behalf of Moray Economic Partnership. The study concluded that the A95 is vitally important to Moray and the surrounding area's economy and, as such, that of Scotland and the rest of the UK. It was found that there are several key problems along the route and that these could act to prohibit growth in the economy around it. As a result, transport planning objectives have been developed for this study which relate to these problems on the route and various options have been generated to meet the objectives and address the problems. These have been sifted to identify feasible options to develop further; a total of 7 options are recommended for further discussion and appraisal - each successfully addresses at least one identified problem and several study and government objectives.

4. Spaceport – next steps post General Election

Since the last meeting the DfT published a shortlist of locations that excluded Kinloss Barracks and RAF Lossiemouth from any further consideration in the current Spaceport Consultation and down-selection. The exclusion had been on the direction from the MoD, citing operational reasons as the primary rationale.

The Spaceport team sought to engage with the MOD before the GE, but instead received an inappropriate response, noting that it came from a Secretariat rather than from Minister (this is a clear violation of Ministerial Correspondence). The action now is to challenge the Secretariat response through contacts at the MOD and via the MP for Moray, The Honourable Angus Robertson MP. A complicating factor will be the timing of decisions relating to the next Strategic Defence and Security Review anticipated this autumn.

The bid process had not yet commenced the MEP Theme Group IIBD would try and drive a change of consideration by the MoD. It was agreed that in the event Kinloss Barracks is reinstated on the shortlist, partner resources would need to be applied, and in short order, to produce an effective bid. Members of the project team may need to visit decision makers.

JJ advised that downstream there may be opportunities if not successful at this stage, as there will likely be a need for additional spaceports; more importantly Moray knew how to deliver a 'campus approach'.

5. Communications Report

Campaigns and Initiatives

- The Real Macbeth – capitalising on new film
- The Real Macbeth – Possible Alan Cumming Documentary
- We're talkin Moray Campaign
- Have a very Moray Christmas – TV advertising/social media campaign
- Elgin BID – various food and drink initiatives including leaflet
- A95 upgrade lobby

Potential Future Stories

- Food and Drink for the Scotsman
- Macbeth film opportunity
- Family films story
- Floor Relief

13 Feb to 8 May – Coverage

- Castle2Cathedral2Cashmere
- Spaceport
- Wold Host Training
- Tourism Seminar and expo
- Craigellachie Stamp Bridge

- Culture Strategy
- Space Game Sponsorship
- Modern Apprenticeships
- Assisting in managing negative stories – Accunostics, McKellar and Spaceport

The Macbeth film will be shown during the current Cannes film festival and will be released to the UK in October. No current US release date.

While the film was shot in Skye the opportunity is to piggyback by attracting visitors to Moray as to the Real Macbeth. Discussions are on-going with the film distribution company through Visit Scotland with the possibility to support the launches, in the UK and other locations and attract visitors to Moray.

Action: DM to discuss with JJ & MM how to engage the business community to exploit this opportunity collectively. A Public/Private sector project team to be formed.

Discussions are ongoing with A Cumming agent re interest in producing programme about relationship with Macbeth.

MM advised a 9 Japanese film crew are visiting Saturday 16 May 2015 supporting Japanese leading actor with interest in Macbeth. "Talking Moray" JACU outlined a proposal for a project to promote the correct way to pronounce "Moray". Proposal is to work with schools, distilleries, fishermen, famous Moravians to make short film campaign and possibly link it with work on "have a very Moray christmas".

Comments supportive and to be sensitive not to dilute "Moray Speyside" brand.

6. MEP Governance

Improvements for implementation

JJ advised that the MEP currently works to 3 main documents: Moray 2023, the Moray Economic Strategy (MES) and Elgin 'City of the Future'. A refresh of the strategy has commenced. Step one has been to confirm that the tasks within all 3 documents, as well as the associated actions are being taken forward/undertaken.

For the refreshed MES document, the Strategy will be edited and separated from the Action Plan. The Action Plan will be updated setting aside projects and initiatives that have been superseded and inserting any new projects and initiatives. The Action Plan will contain unique identifiers for each project and activity and will be able to be updated periodically,; more importantly it would allow projects, tasks and action to be properly (and effectively) cross-referenced. The Vice Chair would provide a covering narrative that would explain how the 3 documents 'bridge', and the relationship/dependencies between them.

There should be a route map of documents so they can be used by partner member and programme managers. The activities undertaken by partners day to day need to be as close as possible to the programme work. The aim of the refreshed documents is for them to be

accessible to the public demonstrating real activity and allowing business to recognise work that is being done.

MEP Board Programme Links were requested to regularly post action plans, and meeting notes on the MEP programme pages of the CPP web site to help share information with the public about their work GS confirmed that it is Donna Skene donna.skene@moray.gov.uk at TMC who would upload all documents onto webpage through ICT.

Annual Progress report to CPP August 13

GS has circulated a partially update 2023 Outcomes document. Updated with latest data for each chart with a commentary showing what has changed since June 2014. Partners are being asked to consider if the targets need adjusting, replacing, what resources are needed to meet the target. The document has been sent to programme managers for them to update the sections showing how partners are contributing to the delivery of the outcomes, to update the confidence ratings and to identify if additional resources are required to achieve the target outcomes. Partners and programme managers to return updates to Joanne by June 19, allowing enough time to clarify any information and update the document in time for August 13.

DO reflected on the limitations of Chart 3 average wage and noted Moray would need to generate more than 1,000 jobs with wages at £50,000/year to reach the 2023 target.

RG suggested devising a secondary target that includes the military income not currently included in the regional average data.

Plucarden Abbey – Host Brother Michael

Brother Michael joined the meeting and welcomed MEP to Pluscarden Abbey.

He considered the main contribution to the economy was likely from the abbey shop and any impact from the abbey would be to the visitor economy. He recalled there had been a Moray Church Trail promotion some years ago. The brothers reoccupied the abbey in 1948 and they accommodate people from all over. They have estimated around 15,000 – 20,000 visitors a year. Some come on retreat they don't charge for hospitality but ask for a donation. They also have a gift shop which has an income of around £25,000 a year.

The brothers have development plans to renovate parts of the abbey to create accommodation from women guests and to improve the library (currently over 40,000 scattered books around the building). They are holding fundraising events and with help from HLF funding plan that work building work will blend with the 13th century building. The brothers are looking to employ a fund raiser part time and have created a CGI fly through to help promote support for the restoration.

JJ agreed that the abbey helped to attract visitors to Moray-Speyside and greatly contributed to the well being of the community, which was proud of the asset and glad to support the brothers ,

7. Promoting Moray via Food and Drink Sector – Strategic overview

Once again the Regions MP and MSP have surfaced the idea of promoting Moray-Speyside as a Whisky Region, and in a similar manner to that of the Champagne region. Instead MM advised that Moray Speyside Tourism (MST) was looking to promote and develop a wider picture including a Moray Larder List; this suggestion would go beyond the association with just whisky and recognise the 'wider table' of food and drink production that exists in Moray-Speyside. MST has applied for funding from Visit Scotland which includes assistance to establish Seafest. MST has produced a leaflet to promote its picture and aspirations to the trade. The Moray Speyside Larder, the Draw of the Coast, Cycle Moray Speyside, Moray Heritage, Towns Villages and Countryside.

8. Programme Report and Discussion Development Programme

JG circulated Development Programme Report and gave an update and actions going forward on the following subjects. See **Appendix 1**.

9. Partners Updates

TSI – Malcolm McNeil will email any update to chair.

TM, (UHI)- College Board are underway with process for new principle and interviews are due to be done in August 2015.

RR (Hitrans) – The A95 study has been largely completed to submit to Transport Scotland. An announcement is anticipated from the Independent Airports Commission on air capacity in SE England likely in favour of providing a 3rd runway at Heathrow. Job for the MEP/community is to continue to lobby for more regional access. Inverness are to look at more flights to Amsterdam and to look at international expansion.

DO (HIE) – Reminded A96 consultations are on-going and Transportation Programme need to respond for the MEP

RG (TMC) – Not expecting any change in ruling administration

FM (CNPA) – CNPA has provided input to consultation by Transport Scotland on A9.

Planning Permission has been granted in Tomintoul for Wigwams as a choice of holiday accommodation.

10. AOB

GS advised there would be coverage in the media for Apprentice week. It is held every year mid-May and this is an opportunity for the business community to showcase the employees it is training.

Appendix 1

Elgin Business Park (Barmuckity)
Provision of employment land for industrial and business development in Elgin enabling business growth and diversification and creating employment opportunities
Result
Project is ongoing
Reasons
The project was being delivered through the private sector and tri partite negotiation between the Developer, Land Owner and HIE. The risk associated with the project was too great for the individual parties to carry and negotiations ceased at the end of 2014. This is considered to be market failure that now requires public sector intervention to deliver the project. Alternative land has been considered but only Barmuckity provides sufficient land required for expansion in Elgin
Actions
The Moray Council is leading the project to develop phase 1 of Barmuckity, initial talks with the land owner have taken place and we are waiting for the initial response before moving forward with the project. Options around partnerships with HIE and developers will be considered as the project moves forward the pace of which is dependent on the land owners cooperation.
Forres Enterprise Park
Provision of employment land for industrial and business development in Forres enabling business growth and diversification and creating employment opportunities
Result
The Enterprise Park continued it's success attracting new businesses to Moray, Horizon building is fully let and there remains a pipeline of interest from companies wishing to set up on the park.
Reasons
The availability of serviced industrial/business land, good marketing and promotion, partnership working and ability for quick turnarounds on builds all contribute to the success
Actions
Next phase of the development of the park being progressed. Continued marketing and promotion Continued partnership work to attract business
Industrial Estate Remodelling
Provision of employment land for industrial and business development in Elgin enabling business growth and diversification and creating employment opportunities
Result
The Council has invested in upgrading provision of the industrial portfolio and are successful in maintaining high occupancy rates. Investments include
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construction of six new business units at Chanonry Road South, Elgin 2. Construction of four new business units at Waterford Circle, Forres 3. Construction of two new business units at Westerton Road North, Keith 4. Upgrade of estate road at Greshop, Forres 5. Upgrade of estate road at Mosstodloch Industrial Estate 6. Completion of sub division of large Unit at Isla Bank Mills, Keith 7. Miscellaneous repairs, maintenance and minor improvements at various locations

Reasons
Continued investment in industrial estate is one of the economic development priorities of the Council.
Actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to make provision for refurbishment and maintenance works to the Industrial Portfolio. 2. Consideration should be given to upgrading the roads at Greshop Industrial Estate, Forres to a standard suitable for adoption. 3. Provision of new Business Units at Waterford Circle, Forres 4. Consideration should be given to the provision/acquisition and servicing of land for further Industrial development in Forres. 5. Provision of new Business Units at Chanonry Industrial Estate, Elgin 6. New Service Road at Westerton Road South 7. Provision of new Business Units at Westerton Road North, Keith 8. Upgrading of roadway at Mosstodloch Industrial Estate 9. Upgrading of roadway at Isla Bank Mills, Keith 10. Provision of new Business Units at Burghead 11. Investigate the provision serviced industrial development land in East Moray (Cullen and Buckie)

Buckie Harbour SME
Provision of employment land for industrial and business development in Elgin enabling business growth and diversification and creating employment opportunities
Result
Redevelopment of storage yard and sheds will be completed by August 2015
Reasons
The development used ERDF funding to support the redevelopment of an underutilised area of Buckie Harbour
Actions
No further action required, project will be completed by August 2015

Ease of Doing Business
Ensuring that Moray Council supports business growth and development
Result
Approach taken to business and development is now one that facilitates and works with developers at an early stage to ensure the quality of development and ease of business.
Reasons
Clear approach established within the Council to support sustainable economic development as a priority.
Actions
Review of enforcement policies to reflect the Scottish Governments Regulators Strategic Code of Practice by September 2015

Development Plan, Expansion Land and Office accommodation
Provision of employment land for industrial and business development in Elgin enabling business growth and diversification and creating employment opportunities
Result
Proposed plan identifies sufficient housing and employment land for the next five years and beyond.
Reasons
The Local Development Plan has been examined and will be reported to committee on 24 th June 2015 following this it will be submitted to the Scottish Government for 28 days before being adopted by the Council. Although sufficient land is identified there is still work to do to encourage development.
Actions
Master planning work with developers to release land and ensure quality of development on the ground

Lossie Green redevelopment – master planning
Regeneration of Elgin town centre
Result
Charrette carried out in March is due to be reported back to Committee in August. The charrette process identified the need to address the High street issues first and practical and realistic options for Lossie Green and Cooper Park
Reasons
The options contained in Elgin city for the future were ambitious relying on retail and commercial propositions that are not achievable in the current economic climate, the charrette has reviewed these and will a strong base for growth and action plan for delivery
Actions
Establishment of working group to take forward Town Centre initiatives. Development of prioritised, costed and resourced action plan Programme management plan for monitoring and reporting progress

Buckie Harbour Strategic review
Development of Buckie Harbour for offshore renewables, expanded harbour area and ship yard development
Result
Buckie Harbour Master Plan produced, planning application for lubricating oil plant received, ongoing negotiations for Offshore maintenance and shipyard.
Reasons
Offshore renewables operation and maintenance has been delayed due to the Contract for Difference process where MORL were not successful and will need to bid again in October 2015. Wider plans and discussions for the ship yard are ongoing with a number of potential users
Actions
Respond to procurement request from MORL to support O&M Carry on the promotion and negotiation in relation to Shipyard and surrounding areas. Identify investment costs and address wider issues e.g. accommodation

Student accommodation
Student accommodation to assist attracting people to Moray College and potential to increase accommodation provision in the town centre.
Result
UHI have explored provision but as yet no commitment has been made
Reasons
Available sites and funding appear to be the main issue surrounding provision
Actions
Take no further action until a commitment is received from UHI or Moray college to provide accommodation

College Campus
Renewal of Moray College Campus
Result
Plans for campus redevelopment produced and being taken forward by the College
Reasons
Reliant on funding provision
Actions
Moray College to identify publicity and lobbying requirements to support the campus proposals

Dr Grays (NHS 2020 vision)
Expansion and development of Dr Grays campus
Result
NHS rethink on future provision .
Reasons
No campus redevelopment identified in NHS 2020 vision with more care provided at home or through digital
Actions
No further action.

St Giles extension
Extension of St Giles shopping centre
Result
Planning permission for an extension has been approved but the development has not commenced
Reasons
The current market conditions are difficult for the retail sector which has not allowed the development to progress.
Actions
See Lossie Green and actions for Town Centres Project now removed as planning permission achieved

Low Priority Actions

Elgin West business park Regional sports facility Art centre North Port Elgin redevelopment Lossie Green redevelopment full implementation A96 road improvements High Street Pavilion
Various outcomes across a number of themes
Result
Projects were classed as low priority due to lack of resources or difficulties presented, some will be superseded by the Elgin charrette process, others are no longer appropriate in the current economic climate and public sector financial constraints.
Reasons
Projects identified as part of Moray Economic Strategy but the economic climate, infrastructure costs or property owners resistance make them undeliverable at this time.
Actions
No further action on these projects and removed from the programme with those relating to Elgin town centre being reshaped through the charrette process.