

Moray Economic Partnership (MEP)

Thursday 23rd February 2017, 10am

Horizon Centre, Enterprise Park Forres, HIE Boardroom

Attendance

John Cowe (Chair) (JC)	Moray Council
James Johnston (Vice Chair) (JJ)	The Moray Strategic Business Forum
Gordon Sutherland (GS)	Moray Council
Rhona Gunn (RG)	Moray Council
Allan Wright (AW)	Convener – Moray Council
Nicola Moss (NM)	The Moray Council
Jim Grant (JG)	The Moray Council
Tom McGarry (TM)	Moray College UHI
Dawn McNiven (DM)	Platform PR
Jane Cumming (JACU)	Platform PR
Dave McCallum (DM)	Skills Development Scotland
Margery McLennan (MM)	Chamber of Commerce
Steven Hutcheon (SH)	HIE
Norman MacAskill (NMac)	Tsi Moray
Laurie Piper (LP)	Moray Speyside Tourism

Apologies

Ranald Robertson	Hitrans
Fabio Villani	tsiMoray
David Patteron	UHI
Murray Ferguson	CNPA
Fraser Grieve	SCDI

Item		
1.	<p>Meeting Note and Actions from December 8 2016</p> <p>JC thanked everyone for attending.</p> <p>JC has received a letter from Margery to withdraw from MEP. JC thanked Margery for everything completed over the last few years at the Chamber of Commerce it is now at a much higher level than previous. Lossie Seafest will be in its 4th year this year and has had a lot of help from the Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>JC welcomed Laurie who will be representing Moray Speyside Tourism (Chamber of Commerce) with Margery's retirement.</p> <p>Basing review (Kinloss)</p> <p>JJ advised he met with Scottish Government (SG) and an email was circulated from Jim Grant this morning to update the Kinloss MEP group. Experience shows that the</p>	

	<p>correct engagement at the correct time is essential.</p> <p>The current emphasis is on bases that are closing and conversations have been made with those local authorities regarding reuse opportunities. Kinloss is not closing and we have commitment to retain the barracks. Need to continue to engage with MOD and monitor any potential future changes to this position.</p> <p>GS added that there will be an Employment and Learning Fayre held in May for staff, spouses and partners of 39 Regiment & RAF Lossiemouth, to be held at Kinloss barracks. Support agencies, community groups and employers have been invited to participate and showcase what Moray has to offer with a view supporting integration of MOD staff and families in the area.</p> <p>Item 8 – JJ queried the minute re consideration of a conflict of interest for HIE support to develop Barmuckity business and industrial park. SH confirmed that HIE have carried out assessments and there is no conflict. If HIE put a grant into the scheme it would only be for commercial land. An Economic Impact Assessment has been carried out and is on file.</p>	
2.	<p>Communications Report (Jane Cumming)</p> <p>Campaigns and Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship Week (6-10 March) • Castle2Cathedral2Cashmere Support • WorldHost ongoing support • Support for Moray Business Week (ongoing for 2017) • Have a Moray Christmas advert social media <p>Future Stories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family firms story for Scotsman and wider circulation • Friends of the Scotsman article on Lossiemouth and Kinloss investment • Scottish Apprenticeship Week – Videos and Press Releases. • Kinloss Barracks Employment and Leisure Fayre (May) joint initiative – (promote the close relationship with Military in Moray and skills military bring). • WorldHost. Station Hotel destination status, Fochabers and Forres to announce destination status. • Northern Scot column Feb: Year of Heritage, Archaeology and Culture. <p>8 December 2016 to 22 February 2017 Coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Scot columns for Dec & Jan: Christmas events and rail improvements. • Executive magazine – January – Ones to Watch • DYW/WorldHost course at Johnstons • C2C2C stories – Sculpture 	

	<p>Dawn has been working on Moray Business Week and Moray Host, C2C2C support and Apprenticeship week.</p> <p>JACU met with UHI in December to discuss future stories with family firms but has not heard anything since. TM will chase up for JACU.</p> <p>C2C2C has raised the profile of Moray.</p> <p>JACU confirmed there is a new way for measuring evaluation in mm² and will circulate an electronic copy when complete.</p> <p>MM asked if Scottish Apprentice videos are the same ones to be used by DWI. JACU confirmed they are the same videos.</p>	<p>TM</p> <p>JACU</p>
3.	<p>City Deal/Growth Deal</p> <p>RG advised that workshops have been completed with Stakeholders and additional delegates and the second phase is a series of 6 workshops with the last workshop being held on 27 February 2017. There has been good attendance to workshops so far and after Monday's workshop RG and JG will draw together outputs and verify the basis to the initial proposals, strengths/weaknesses and refine. A list of potential projects will also be drafted and other proposals will need further discussion and high level sifting.</p> <p>Improvements to the A95 will likely be considered for the final project list.</p> <p>RG had contact before Christmas with the Scottish Government and may be able to catch up with them at the start of March 2017.</p> <p>RG, GS and JG and full time project manager David Moreton (who has background knowledge and project management skills) have been working on this. The use of CA trainee who has supported other bids will be working 1 day per week until May 2017. RG is in discussion with Rachel Hunter regarding support from HIE.</p> <p>Economic analysis is the next step and requires robust up to date data to back up proposals. RG has also had contact with UHI Economic Research Team who have been involved with Highland Growth Deal.</p> <p>It is important to maintain contact with Neil McLennan at Westminster and Martin McCloskey at SG and they will also be sent the results. Local Councillors have contacted David Mundell to keep the interest up. Highlands, Ayrshire growth bids are well ahead in their development and we require to maintain the profile of a Moray growth bid.</p> <p>In terms of principles (Place, Connectivity, Skills and Business) we need to address inclusive growth and that will tie in with social justice and health objectives. The local skills investment plan can help to inform a bid.</p>	

	<p>MEP and Employability partnership is crucial to help shape and implement a growth package.</p> <p>AW advised that Secretary of State will be prepared to host reception to promote the Moray Deal and welcomed advice from partnership members on where it should be held. David Mundell would be prepared to come to Moray or would it be best held in Edinburgh?</p> <p>RG confirmed we are fast reaching this stage but cannot do anything until after the local elections. When is it best to do this? RG doesn't think we will be ready before April and would be better to do it in a polished and professional way and should take place in the proximity of those decision makers we are trying to influence.</p> <p>JG added that when we have the reception is to make sure we have the correct business leaders from Moray.</p> <p>JJ advised that Graham Hutcheon of the CBI should be involved; he understands the process and has leverage from the distilling industry.</p> <p>JACU added that in her experience it would be better to hold engagements such as dinners with MSP including all key members. To emphasise importance and make distinctive from other business, focus on the personal approach i.e. invitations should be sent out in a more personal way rather than by email.</p> <p>JC advised that it may take some time and will be under the new administration of Moray Council.</p> <p>MMac asked what further opportunities are there for engagement of wider communities. RG replied growth deals are strategic and once we have more details on projects there may be more need for community engagement but hard to say at the moment. Proposals will be circulated through Community Engagement Groups.</p> <p>SH highlighted that from past experience when you have a list of projects and some are not delivered you get no praise for 80% completed and will be criticised the 20% that was not.</p> <p>MM indicated that when creating a list to make sure the more important are at the top.</p> <p>A list will be run past MEP members to make sure we are using the expertise round the table.</p>	
4.	<p>Update on the CPP Public Outreach held 2016</p> <p>RG advised at the end of last year there was engagement by the CPP on its role, goals and objectives. Respondents were asked to categorise where activities should be a priority, should stop start or be done differently. In February the collated product from engagement was available for response by the relevant partnerships.</p>	

	<p>Info has been organised on that basis and every partnership has been asked to provide views.</p> <p>Stephen Cooper arrived at 10:50.</p> <p>GS will provided a first response over 18 headings and that will go round for polishing and virtual consideration from MEP, the method of sharing responses has not been firmed up but may include social media. GS submits MEP information on social media as do the MEP media services. We have robust media presence and input so should be able to get responses out there. CPP will also collate responses.</p> <p>There has been no approach decided on Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP). CPP Meeting will be held 23 February and final deadline is October 2017.</p> <p>It was suggested to use something short for social media or link to blog or forum, use themes, images or sounds to capture. RG to share raw data with LP for advice.</p>	
5.	<p>Apprentice Levy</p> <p>The board was informed about the new national apprentice levy with the following briefing note:</p> <p>Q: How many businesses in Moray will be subject to the Apprenticeship Levy, how much of the levy will be coming back to Moray and will any of this be a reduction in the funding we already receive from Westminster?”</p> <p>A: We can't be specific about the companies who will pay the levy in Moray as it will be collected by HMRC on behalf of the UK government. The Scottish Government is however hoping to set up a data sharing arrangement with HMRC which would give it access to this information.</p> <p>Based on analysis prepared for the developing Moray Growth Bid about the size of local business units, at worst about 2.5% of Moray businesses would be likely to fall within the £3 million pay bill threshold, so the national average of 2% is probably also broadly accurate here.</p> <p>In terms of how much will come back to Moray, we have no detailed information on that at present. The levy funding which the Scottish Government has received from Westminster is being distributed through various schemes for training and similar e.g. via Skills Development Scotland, The Scottish Funding Council, Colleges etc but none is coming directly to local authorities.</p> <p>The general information currently available on distribution of the levy funding is as follows:</p> <p>“Scotland's share of funding from the UK Government's apprenticeship levy will support a range of employment measures including the delivery of 30,000 Modern Apprenticeships starts per year by 2020 and the establishment of a new fund to help</p>	

	<p>employers up-skill and re-skill their workforce.</p> <p>Following on from a recent consultation on the apprenticeship levy, the Scottish Government has published a report that confirms it will use the funding to support skills, training and employment in Scotland.</p> <p>The levy will be used to support :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a new £10 million Workforce Development Fund which will help employers work in partnership with colleges to up-skill and re-skill their existing workforce and address skills gaps • Continue to expand the number of Modern Apprenticeships to reach the Scottish Government target of 30,000 new starts per year by 2020 • Increase the number of Graduate Level and Foundation Apprenticeships in 2017-18 • Partnerships between employers, local authorities and the third sector to tackle unemployment and under-representation in the labour market • The continued implementation of the Youth Employment Strategy and delivery of employment focused college provision for young people • Skills support for priority sectors including digital, care and early years. <p>Following consultation with employers, providers and stakeholders, the following changes will come into effect for providers delivering Modern Apprenticeships in 2017-18:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A new Rural Supplement for training providers in recognition of the additional costs for delivering in rural areas ○ The removal of public sector eligibility restrictions, meaning from April 2017, public sector employers will have the same access to Modern Apprenticeship funding as those in the private and third sector* ○ An increase in the number of Modern Apprenticeships Frameworks that can be supported for apprentices aged over 25 ○ Enhanced contribution rates for disabled people and those with experience of care up to the age of 29. <p>*Note: Work is being done by Human Resources on the opportunities which this presents for the Council</p> <p>A link to the apprenticeship levy FAQ's which details the activity the apprenticeship levy will contribute to is provided below.</p> <p>https://www.apprenticeships.scot/take-on-an-apprentice/apprenticeship-levy/</p>	
6.	<p>Programme Report and Discussion Transportation Group</p> <p>NM carried out presentation which is attached and notes below.</p>	

	<p>Ranald Robertson at Hitrans is the lead for the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and the consultation on the draft strategy has now closed for Elgin Transport Strategy.</p> <p>RTS vision is to delivery connectivity across the region which enables sustainable economic growth and helps communities to actively participate in economic and social activities. Main transport objectives are making network resilience, safety, tackle capacity constraints and improving quality of travel to make it easy and useful.</p> <p>Moray Projects are Elgin Transport Strategy, A96 dualling, A96 Lorry Parking Strategy, A96 public transport strategy for rail and road, A95, Active Travel priorities, Low carbon, Elgin Bus Station Upgrade, Rail Freight and Buckie Harbour.</p> <p>ETS is to make it easier to move around Elgin. Elgin is predicted to grow in Development Plan and additional population with around 15,000 peak journeys per day.</p> <p>There are new road links and travel improvements changing roundabouts at Laich Moray and Asda to signal junctions.</p> <p>Consultation closed last week and will go to Committee on 29 March 2017 for approval.</p>	
7.	<p>Partner Updates</p> <p>Employability Partnership met February 22 and looked at CLD action plan. SDS are working with HIE and PACE team at Capita.</p> <p>Skills Investment Plan for Moray - Steven Sheridan met with Moray Council and bid for funds to produce the plan is going through which will be in the new financial year. This will be the core skills document for growth deal. A similar plan has already been completed for Orkney, once contracted work the plan is anticipated to take 12 weeks to produce.</p> <p>TsiMoray are moving forward with the LEADER programme. The programme manager is Norman McKaskill is in post and additional colleagues will join the team in the next few weeks. TsiMoray will be able to accept applications once it has been set up and are aiming to launch in March/April 2017 once they are confident everything is in place.</p> <p>Annual Join the Dots events will be held on 22 March 2017 and will be publicised. Registration will open in a couple of days.</p> <p>Moray Speyside Tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses and partners to attend Edinburgh Expo in April. • Laich of Moray Project has the potential to be transformational from Brodie 	

Castle to Spey bay. Communities and geography to work together.

- MST have worked with the chamber of commerce around business rates for tourism businesses and petitioned hard to make sure Moray information is fed out.
- MST has engaged with MP/MSP's in the last few weeks and continue to carry out workshops for the sector.
- Attending career choice days at high schools to provide information on careers in tourism.
- Stakeholder Jim Walker has reflected MST work is positive and building up ahead of steam.
- GSA Winter School estimated to have generated £100,000 for the local economy with – 91 beds for 11 nights locally.

LP also thanked Margery for all her work with Moray Speyside Tourism.

David Oxley and Acting Chief Executive Officer (HIE) Charlotte Wright have been involved in Enterprise Agencies review and expect to find out in March.

[Update – this has since concluded and link to press below]

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-39442747>

Barmuckity funding paper is scheduled for consideration by HIE board on 6th March 2017.

Business Rates review – JC added that he is delighted to see the movement from SG last week by Derek McKay. He felt that the Cabinet Secretary for Finance could have done more to reduce the impact of rate rises on Moray Business. It was good to see a new turn but could have been more but a good outcome overall.

Cairngorm National Park Authority submitted the following update:

- **Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan:** Following successful consultation in 2016 drafting the Plan is under way and due to be considered by CNPA Board for approval in April and then submitted to Ministers. Structure of the plan is likely to be based on the 9 big issues that were subject to consultation under outcomes relating to Conservation, Visitor Experience and Rural Development.
- **Tomintoul and Glenlivet HLF project:** Jackie Webley now in place as Programme Manager and Interviews this week for Interpretation Officer and Landscape officer
- **Cairngorms Local Development Plan 2020:** Call for sites and Ideas has now closed. 95 sites submitted. Consultation on Main Issues Report in Autumn 2017
- **Snow Roads Scenic Route Project:** Installation of viewpoint structure near

	<p>Tomintoul expected in March. First meeting of Snow Roads Steering Group took place on 17 Feb and Project Officer due to start work in Spring 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Enterprise in the National Park: CNPA and the Association of Cairngorms Communities are organising a “Social Enterprise Summit” for Tuesday 28th March in the Richmond Memorial Hall in Tomintoul (1600 – 1930 - times to be confirmed). All welcome but book places via Lee Haxton CNPA. The aims of this event are:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to provide information and advice to communities who are new to the idea of social enterprise;• to provide an opportunity for existing social enterprises to share ideas and experiences and discuss the main issues they are encountering – with each other and a number of experts (including Social Enterprise Scotland, Highlands & Islands Social Enterprise Zone, Social Investment Scotland, the Social Enterprise Academy and Highlands & Islands Enterprise).	
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