

## MEP

**Thursday 12th May 2016 – 10:30am**  
**Johnston's of Elgin, Newmill, Elgin, Moray, IV30 4AF**

John Cowe(JC)	Chair	The Moray Council
James Johnston (JJ)	Vice Chair	The Moray Strategic Business Forum
Allan Wright (AW)	Observer	The Moray Council
Dawn McNiven (DMcN)		Platform PR
Margery McLennan (MM)		Chamber of Commerce
Gordon Sutherland (GS)		The Moray Council
Dave McCallum (DMcC)		Skills Development Scotland
David Oxley (DO)		HIE
Jim Grant (JG)		The Moray Council
Ranald Robertson (RR)		Hitrans
Fraser Grieve (FG)		SCDI
Tom McGarry (TG)		Moray College UHI
Jenny Houldsworth (JH)	Host	Johnstons of Elgin
Malcolm McNeil (MMcN)		tsiMORAY
Willie Wood (WW)	HR Director (Host)	Johnstons of Elgin
Norman Ross (NR)		Gordon & MacPhail (MSBF)
Murray Ferguson (MF)		Cairngorms National Park
Steven Westbrook (SW)	For item 4	UHI
Andrew Anderson (AA)		HIE
Caroline O'Connor (CO)	Corporate Secretary	The Moray Council

	Item	Action
1.	<p><b>Presentation - Jenny Houldsworth of Johnston's</b></p> <p>JH introduced the presentation giving an overview of the current work with Investors in Young People (IIYP), schools interaction and apprentices.</p> <p>She advised Johnstons gave consideration as to how to approach recruitment as there was not ready pool of talent in terms of textile skills and it can take 7 years to train up a tuner in the weaving room. It was noted 21% of the workforce are over 55 and a lot of school leavers are leaving the area.</p> <p>Johnstons had engaged with teachers and young people for help to address future workforce needs with mutual learning from both sides.</p> <p>The first event was launched in August 2015 with 60 pupils from all 8 secondary schools attending and gave Johnstons the opportunity to showcase all jobs. The programme consisted of 3 visits, with 2 week gaps. The first visit was a tour of the site, students advised how Johnston's could appeal to young people as an employer and were given practical activities. Students were given a real interview. The pupils had engaged well and those from Buckie High had produced their own video which showed real initiative.</p> <p>There is now a programme of work with schools, bespoke collaborations, provide meaningful work placements, progress a career ready programme</p>	

	<p>and holiday placements. There are currently 100 modern apprenticeships involved which are recognised by IYYP.</p> <p>WW then spoke about the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Group. Noted this was a career ready group and just put an advert out for 3 mentors. WW advised he had recently talked at a creativity event with all headteachers, employers etc and asked teachers/headteachers who had been to Johnstons and if they knew what Johnstons do as an employer. About 80% of those asked did not know about all the job opportunities, with the same percentage with no knowledge of DYW.</p> <p>The Board has held 3 meetings and plan to hold an event in Moray, when they are fully prepared, and that is what they are currently working towards. Noted Moray mainly consists of small employers but they are as important as the larger employers.</p> <p>DYW would like that pupils are made aware of jobs in Moray before they make their choices in 3<sup>rd</sup> year. DYW should be bespoke to each business, be about interaction with youngsters and involving them at all stages.</p> <p>JC congratulated WW on the success noting that they had spoken to 2400 pupils since August last year and they were looking to take on 185 employees in next 5-10 years with between 50-60 under the age of 19. WW confirmed they are now seeing large numbers which is great. A lot is about awareness for Johnstons going forward however he would be happy for any business to learn from the Johnston's experience and make it bespoke for their own business.</p> <p>SW queried whether videos could be used for small employers, or a list of jobs on a website. WW is always looking for ideas for DYW group and is developing an action plan.</p> <p>JJ thanked JH and WW for the information and noted they had taken focus of enabling the future but were also developing a framework that can be used across the sector. He stressed the important factor was that they had broken down the core business from the product. He noted businesses who fail are those who cannot breakdown the marketing from the product and Johnstons were providing a fantastic example for others.</p> <p>FG said it was great to hear about the success and about what skills are required. It would also be interesting to know from those classed as reluctant leavers in the recent HIE survey of young people what would make them stay here.</p> <p>MM thought the comment about Buckie High was fantastic, however shared the concern of others that teachers are not aware of what is on offer and until that happens there is little chance of youngsters realising. She suggested the approach used by Johnstons could be replicated through other larger businesses.</p> <p>WW stated that anyone in the room that wanted to know more about the Johnstons interaction plan is welcome to ask. He also asked if there were any ideas for the DYW board these would be much appreciated.</p>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Apologies</b>	Apologies from Pam Gowans (NHS), Jane Cumming (Platform PR), Rhona Gunn (Moray Council), David Patterson (Moray College UHI).	

<p>2.</p>	<p><b>Meeting Note &amp; Actions from – February 25 2016 (Chair)</b></p> <p><b>A95 study</b> – JC has a reply from RL and he hopes discussions between officials will commence during the new parliament.</p> <p><b>Defence Review</b> – JC met Group Captain Godfrey along with the Elgin Councillors in March. It had been a very productive meeting and JC had stressed they would appreciate more communication within the community. JJ indicated the defence position will be stable for the next few years and the programme surrounding new maritime aircraft looks robust. It is clear that expectations require to be managed however opportunities for business do exist. He is hopeful that by the next MEP we will have more definitive understanding of what the new platform means in terms of opportunity.</p> <p><b>City Deals</b> – discussion with Government Officials (Scottish Futures Trust) are being sought.</p> <p><b>Business Gateway</b> – With closure of Highland Opportunity Ltd, 3 staff are transferring employment to Moray Council which will retain a shared service with Highland Council.</p> <p><b>10 year plan</b> – noted now extends to 2026.</p>	<p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p><b>Communications Report (Jane Cumming)</b></p> <p>Public Relations Activities 25 February 2016 to 11 May 2016</p> <p><b>Campaigns and initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castle2Cathedral2Cashmere news release (4 in total)</li> <li>• World Host continuing</li> <li>• A95 strategy draft</li> <li>• Apprenticeships Week videos and social media</li> <li>• Schools videos</li> <li>• Support to Moray Business Week</li> <li>• Business Scotland article (June/Jul)</li> </ul> <p><b>Future stories</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family firms story for Scotsman and wider circulation</li> <li>• Worldhost article for Northern Scot column April</li> <li>• Article on new member SCDI planned May</li> <li>• Business Forum article</li> <li>• Buckie Harbour- line prepared</li> <li>• Schools video launch 15 June 2016</li> <li>• Repatriation of Maori Mahunga</li> </ul> <p><b>25 Feb to 11 May 2016 Coverage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity story in Scotsman</li> <li>• Business Scotland Moray focus</li> <li>• Elgin Sculpture</li> <li>• Apprenticeships</li> <li>• Tourism summit</li> </ul> <p>JG advised the Partnership of the Community Planning Partnership</p>	

	<p>community engagement and asked for awareness to be raised. It is to be launched next week and will be focussing on business start-ups. He encouraged members to log onto Business Gateway on the Facebook page where there would be a live question session on Wednesday 18 May between 7pm-8pm. He stressed the importance of trying to get people to use and feed into the decision making of the Council as it is very important that businesses have a voice in those decisions. MM queried whether JG could provide some information on this so it could be passed on through Facebook and JG agreed to do so.</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p> <p><b>JG</b></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Moray Economy Dataset – Presentation followed by discussion with Steve Westbrook UHI Economic Intelligence Unit</b></p> <p>SW advised the unit was working with HIE and local authorities to provide a universal data set for the Highlands and Islands which will enable a comparison of measures across Moray, the Highlands and Islands and Scotland. The dataset will be updated as information becomes available and it can be shared as required.</p> <p>The data set will be posted on the Councils website with other information and research <a href="http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_2087.html">http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_2087.html</a>.</p> <p>The data set provides comprehensive information and context for the MEP performance targets</p> <p>JC thanked SW for the in depth presentation and stressed that all the information contained in the presentation would require to be considered.</p> <p>JJ indicated more work requires to be done and work done with SW regarding information that we need to report in terms of the 10 year plan.</p> <p>MF noted there is little in the figures about digital connectivity and agreed with JJ about work needs to be done. He would like, if possible, to get figures on digital connectivity.</p>	<p><b>SW</b></p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Programme Report &amp; Discussion Tourism and Culture Programme Group (Margery McLellan /Andrew Anderson)</b></p> <p>MM advised 3 videos had been commissioned and produced in collaboration with Visit Scotland. MM agreed to send the videos to all members of the Partnership. The videos are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moray Speyside Larder</li> <li>• Moray Speyside Cycling</li> <li>• Moray Speyside Coast</li> </ul> <p>Cameron Taylor finished at the end of April having done a fantastic job in the last 2 years. A new Operations Manager was appointed May 11 and should be starting on 20 June.</p> <p>Moray Speyside Tourism was created in 2010. Spending in Moray at that time was between £85M-90M. Noted if we do not have data we have no way of measuring what we doing. The STEAM report for 2015 has been published and shows that income from tourism has increased from £94M to £106M. Noted there is a decrease in visitors but increase in those staying in the area. Numbers of those employed in tourism has decreased but this is possibly due to efficiency savings.</p> <p>Motivations for visiting seem to be landscape, history, scenery and top</p>	

activities are sightseeing and historic castles.

The most popular attractions are the Dolphin centre in Speybay, then Brodie and Culbin Forrest.

In terms of development MM met with the Scottish Golf Union to work together in 2017. MST continue to provide support for Laich project and participated with colleagues for the Speyside Whisky Autumn event, called the Still. MM confirmed the Castle to Cashmere project will be very impressive.

The "Pursuit of the Perfect Visitor" is a seminar held 4 times a year which is used as sounding boards for businesses and to continue to build relationships.

MM attended a Visit Scotland expo last month. Last year it was held in Aberdeen with MST and others in the visitor sector from Moray taking 3 stands however participation from Moray doubled in size this year. There was a Moray Towns stand and a festivals stand. Collaboration between the four towns was worth it in itself. Cairngorms National Park looking to come along next year with another two at least.

Funding received from Visit Scotland for a Forres area initiative (other 3 mentioned above).

Moray Larder – now available in digital and hard copy and Facebook promotions.

Moray cycle – has identified brand ambassadors, digital and hard copy of brochures available

Moray Coast – is the focus for 2016, hard copy and digital guide should be ready by end of June.

The release of the Macbeth movie provided opportunity to work with Visit Scotland and promote Moray. MM attended the premiere, produced a Moray map and hosted a dinner for a group of Japanese actors as well as journalists. A movie exhibition was also hosted in 5 venues.

The intention is to develop and move towards a membership model in which colleagues will invest. This will take some time but it is hope to achieve this towards the end of the next 3 year structure. Moray Tourism is grateful for funding from HIE And Moray Council and the support of colleagues. She stressed that without public sector support the aspirations could not be achieved.

AA reiterated MM comments regarding funding and putting together a package. Tourism and culture go hand in hand and he stressed that delivering the MEP's culture strategy will require money. Moray has been made an offer by Creative Scotland and he was to attend a meeting that afternoon to discuss the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of £150,000 funding which will require to be matched from public and private sector.

JC queried how Moray Tourism plan to promote the videos. MM advised the new appointment has a lot of contacts with journalists and newspapers but it could also be provided to companies within Moray who can put it on their own screens and it will be available on Youtube. She also hopes that cycling bloggers who are coming up for the Glenlivet bike event can help promote the cycling video.

MF indicated the Cairngorms National Park is keen to work with Moray

	<p>Tourism. He was to attend a meeting of the Cairngorms Economic Forum that afternoon along with the Cairngorms Tourism Partnership and was conscious that whilst visitors spend time in the park they also spend time visiting the Moray coast. MEP endorsed the landscape partnership bid to be submitted at the end of May for £3.5M which will improve visitor destinations.</p> <p>Agreed MM will post the MST Annual report on the MST website once the draft is finalised.</p>	<b>MM</b>
6.	<p><b>Partner updates (any important events or actions to share)</b></p> <p><b>Moray Funding Seminar</b> – JC had attended the opening of the event. There were 164 delegates there representing a great turnout. There are two Moray participatory budgetting events, the first to be on 28 May and the next on 26 June, having been brought forward due to the popularity of the first event. JG confirmed in the region of 60 applications have been received with £60K available on each day and suspects most applications will receive some funding.</p> <p><b>Piping Forres</b> – the successful event is to be held again on 25 June.</p> <p>GS advised Business Loans Scotland should be up and running from July which will provide loans of last resort to SMEs up to £100,000. Subject to EU funding there is potential to recapitalise the fund after 2018.</p> <p><b>City Deal</b> – noted there have been deals for Inverness and Aberdeen. JC indicated is important that we need to be out there promoting Moray. Moray is now at a slight disadvantage with deals on either side and new roads and new schools are needed however we need people to understand what we are trying to do here.</p> <p><b>Western Link Road</b> – JC advised he read an article in the press saying work has started on new road. Sadly the article refers to the new bridge and road in Inverness to enable building of new houses. He stressed that is exactly what we were looking for in Moray but did not get. Council officers had worked extremely hard to get this for Moray and he takes a very dim view of some politicians turning a blind eye to the future of Elgin and Moray. He hopes that this will be reconsidered by the new administration in Edinburgh.</p> <p>MMcN spoke through his role in as Grampian Housing Association. He is concerned that if money allocated is not spent in Moray then it will be spent elsewhere. Grampian Housing Association want to be part of housing in Moray but if it cannot be delivered then the money will be spent elsewhere.</p> <p><b>Hitrans Update</b> - RR advised that a Transport Scotland consultation on a proposed realignment of the A95 related to the Strathspey Railway extension to Grantown has just closed. The plans are available on Transport Scotland’s website and would include a positive step in a widening of the carriageway to 7.3m. There will be 2m cycle/foot path on the northern section of the realignmnet. The 7.3 metre width could be seen as a positive precedent in line with the recommendations of the recent MEP led feasibility study. Regarding the A96 dualling, consultants on Stage 2 design have not yet been appointed and it was noted the next stage will take about 2 years. Moray Council, HIE and HITRANS are to coordinate joint meeitng with the consultants and Transport Scotland once an appointment is made. In terms of the rail network, an hourly Elgin to</p>	

Inverness service is to be introduced. HST trains will also be introduced in late 2018. A rail station is also proposed for Inverness airport. New flights for Inverness airport have also been announced with Airbus 319 and Airbus 320 for Heathrow and due to demand KLM have already introduced larger aircraft and additional weekend rotations on the Amsterdam route.

**JG advised** - Barmuckity Business Park –is still hopeful this will progress. Alternate base for construction phase of offshore renewables to be at Buckie.

Planning applications are expected for major housing developments in next few months for land at Findrassie and Elgin South.

JG reiterated that the Council's financial constraints are the biggest concern for capital investment and encouraged MEP partners to use their voice in the current budget engagement.

JJ advised he had sat in on a presentation on V&A. The programme is 13 years in and is funded. He congratulated Dundee City Council on the work done however had asked what they had done about connecting Dundee to the rest of the world, ie were planning groups in place. JJ noted that Dundee is closer to Moray than Glasgow or Edinburgh and he thinks there is value in collaboration.

Referendum – JJ raised this as he noted this is a serious topic as 60% of Scotland's export goes to Europe. It's about whether or not we want to be part of the economic planning and support. Scotland gets more funding from Europe than any other country.

Private sector role at MEP – JJ indicated he was not sure the private sector have played as good a role as they should have done. It is important the partnership reflects the requirement for private, public and third sector to work together. George McNeil, Ewan McIntosh and JJ are currently reviewing the role of the Strategic Business Forum.

Malt Whisky Trail launch on 24 May – JJ advised invitations being sent out and it has been rebranded with new material. 2 years ago they were given funding to work with Glasgow School of Art for a new branding. The branding is very inclusive based on a compass to point round the region to landmarks etc. It is hoped to provide significantly more support to Moray Tourism and the website is now receiving 120,000 hits a year.

Social Enterprise Strategy – MMcN raised the issue and noted the strategy does not reach the end of its shelf-life until 2017 however FV wondered whether a presentation to the Partnership would be welcomed. Agreed this could be considered for a future meeting of the Partnership.

Cairngorms Economic Partnership – MF advised there is a consultation from June to end of September on the draft National Park Plan, identifying 9 big issues. It is hoped to organise a big debate about housing in the national park and how they get affordable housing on the land available.

MM had been approached by Neil Innes who is organising Ride the North. The Moray Council built a new bridge over the Findhorn and Ben Romach however there is 0.4 miles which is all mud. Neil had asked MM if there was any chance it can be tarmacked as cyclists don't like coming off tarmac and could be money wasted as surface will need to be redone if not tarmacked. JG advised he would speak to Ian Douglas to ask. MM

**GS**

**JG**

	<p>indicated if this is done it could be make or break as to whether Ride the North would use it and this could mean the difference between £1M coming into Moray over a 4 day period or not. JC suggested asking SUSTRANS. JG to confirm the position with MM.</p> <p>DO advised GSA are to move into new premises later in the year.</p> <p>NR thanked the meeting for allowing him the opportunity to sit in on the meeting and he had found it to be very informative.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016 –10am – Ballindalloch Distillery</p>	