



CNSRP ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

21st March 2017, Pentland Hotel, Thurso

Attendees: Cllr Matthew Reiss (Chair), Derrick Milnes (T&WTC), Trudy Morris (CCoC), June Love (DSRL), Eann Sinclair (CNSRP), William Sutherland (HIAL), Willie Watt (Wick Harbour Trust), Sandy Mackie (SHT), Frances Gunn (CVS North), Cllr Roger Saxon, John Robertson (Crown Estate), Roy Kirk (HIE), Simon Middlemas (Cavendish Dounreay Partnership), Stuart Black (THC), William Manson (ACCC), Ian Mitchell (SNH), Tracy Ligema (NHS)

Apologies: Cllr George Farlow, Dr Paul Monaghan MP, Gail Ross MSP, Stephen Sutherland (CCoC), Willie Watt (WHA), Kristin Scott (SNH), Bill Baxter (CCoC), Donald MacBeath (NHC-UHI), Gill MacVicar (NHS), Stephen Sheridan (SDS), Alex MacManus (THC)

In the absence of Cllr Alastair Rhind, Cllr Matthew Reiss agreed to chair the meeting.

1. PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Previous minutes were agreed as submitted.

1b. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr R Saxon declared an interest as Board member of Caithness Horizons and Chair of the Dounreay Stakeholder Group.

2. PROGRAMME MANAGER UPDATE – PROGRESS REPORT

ES quarterly update report was distributed to everyone in advance of the meeting, and some verbal updates were discussed.

Key Points:

MeyGen

Questions arose about the O&M strategy for MeyGen/ Atlantis now that first 4 devices were operational. J. Robertson offered to discuss this with colleagues and offer an updated picture on this. **ACTION** – J. Robertson

BOWL

- W. Watt highlighted that offshore construction phase was beginning. Seaway Heavy Lifting would have a large construction vessel off the Caithness coast on 27th March to start work on piling.
- Siemens has begun to advertise for apprenticeships, but it was pointed out that these would be delivered through Siemens in Newcastle. The importance of being able to utilise excellent facilities at NH College were highlighted. It was suggested that links between NH College and equivalent college in Newcastle would be a means of facilitating this.

ES then delivered a presentation on CNSRP (circulated separately to members). Key elements of presentation were

- 2014-2017 Programme
 - Latest projections monitored by ES (to mid-March 2017) were 470.25 full-time equivalent jobs in the area – broken down by sector (this figure included the direct O&M jobs announced for the BOWL project, but not the potential indirect jobs.) Business Services had notably underperformed against the target range set. RK confirmed that this would be a focus in the new programme.
 - Enabling activities included the Nucleus facility, the Berriedale Braes, the Killimster B876 road and the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) project – all of which had made significant progress. TM highlighted sustainability as a key issue for DYW. Whilst good progress had been made in mapping out provision with local schools, transport was a key issue in delivering outcomes for pupils.
- Evaluation & wider context
 - The 2006 socio-economic baseline study, which had set many of the recommendations that led to the formation of CNSRP, had now been followed by 2011 and 2016 updates. Key points to note included a decreasing dependence on Dounreay work within the area economy, and an increase in business starts.
 - The 2011 and 2016 studies had highlighted the role played by CNSRP as an enabler of progress
 - A 2017-2020 Programme of activity needs to be seen in the context of wider local and regional issues such as the review of the Dounreay Stakeholder Group and the developing Community Planning Partnerships in both Caithness and Sutherland. The CNSRP Delivery Group had identified a number of risks associated with structures, and was making progress with mitigations.
 - One of these was the streamlining of the heavy schedule of meetings in the area. A key part of this was a proposal to review the roles and purpose of CNSRP Groups. Advisory Board members felt that whilst there was a continuing rationale for the group to meet, a twice-yearly rather than quarterly schedule would be useful. ES agreed to communicate this to the CNSRP Executive Board, and to circulate a revised roles & remits paper once this was available. **ACTION** - E Sinclair
 - S. Mackie asked about communications between various CNSRP groupings, and how project owners would be involved in the new programme. E Sinclair said his intention was to bring together project owners as a group to discuss progress and identify key challenges

(funding, influencing, lessons learnt etc). S. Black highlighted the role of the Executive Board in taking action if discussions at Delivery Group became drawn-out. D Milnes reminded members of the importance of communicating progress following Advisory Board/ Executive Board meetings.

- A 2017-2020 Programme
 - The Delivery Group had identified a series of opportunities to deliver sustainable growth for the area over the next 3 years and beyond. These are Offshore Wind, Tidal, UKVL, Oil & Gas Operations Base, Nuclear Services, Business Services, North Coast 500. Enabling activities in a Skills Investment Plan, physical infrastructure and connectivity have also been discussed.
 - Draft targets for between 270 and 670 full-time equivalent jobs by March 2020 have been developed, and these will be presented to the Executive Board.
 - Members were then invited to inspect the posters in the room. S Middlemas introduced the poster content, highlighting that it represented the opportunities, together with some potential enabling activities
 - S. Black suggested the forward plans for NH College campus should form an integral part of the physical infrastructure/ skills investment plan. This was generally agreed by members.

4b. COMMUNICATIONS

6. MEMBER UPDATES

Written updates were distributed to members in advance of the meeting. The following additional points were also discussed at the meeting:

Highlands and Islands Airports – W Sutherland mentioned that construction work for the BOWL project may be mobilised through Aberdeen rather than Wick JOG airport. NHV helicopters seem likely to use Aberdeen. HIAL would like to work more closely with key players such as SSE, Siemens, NHV – perhaps working with HIE? **ACTION – June Love** to contact W Sutherland to discuss.

Wick Harbour Authority – W Watt outlined the significant progress at Wick Harbour, with the BOWL project construction work now started both onshore and offshore. Discussions also continue with the Moray Offshore Renewables consortium, and with CNSRP partners on harbour infrastructure.

Crown Estate – J Robertson described the change of status from Crown Estate to Crown Estate Scotland, which would take effect from 1st April 2017. There would be no immediate changes of significance, but there is a current public consultation on the long term structure of the organisation. MeyGen was discussed as an opportunity for employment creation in the area through O&M work. J Robertson repeated his offer to discuss current activity around this with colleagues and discuss with E Sinclair. He suggested MeyGen Phase 1B would be similar in scale to Phase 1A, but highlighted the ongoing focus on cost reduction as the key driver.

Highland Council – S Black highlighted that the Caithness & Sutherland Local Plan would be submitted to Scottish Ministers in April. He also confirmed that pupils and staff would move into the new Wick High School over the Easter holiday period.

SNH – I Mitchell highlighted the ongoing work at Forsinard through the Flows to the Future project. He invited members to hold a future Advisory Board meeting at the new facility. This was generally agreed. ACTION – E Sinclair to discuss dates with I Mitchell.

NDA – A MacConnell reminded members that the Nucleus facility was now open in Wick, housing the NDA and Caithness archive collections. The NDA continues to work with ReStore as commercial operator of the facility, and highlighted the role of CNSRP as the “glue” that holds the partners together.

NHS Highland – T Ligema outlined the difficult recruitment issues the Trust was currently experiencing, although a positive development was felt to be the recent recruitment of two rural practitioners. The North Coast Redesign steering group continued to work on a detailed way forward. Developments in technical/ tele healthcare were discussed, including fit-for-purpose housing that would enable people to remain in their homes rather than hospital or care.

Scrabster Harbour Trust – S Mackie reported record revenues to the Trust for 3rd consecutive year. Oil & Gas activity is up by 29%, and fishing activity remains strong (Scrabster is UK’s 4th largest whitefish landing port). An economic impact assessment has been commissioned with support from DSRL. It is hoped the results of this will help inform future investment decisions (eg St Ola pier). A replacement Ice Plant is to be constructed with support from NDA and EU funds. Completion is due this summer. Cllr M Reiss highlighted the recent landslip on the road down to Scrabster harbour and reminded members of the strategic importance of this stretch of road.

7. AOB

None.