



MINUTE OF MEETING OF WEALTHIER & FAIRER STRATEGIC GROUP

THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2009

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillor J Russell (Chair)	The Moray Council
Councillor S Cree	The Moray Council
Councillor G McDonald	The Moray Council
Councillor P Paul	The Moray Council
Councillor A Wright	The Moray Council
Mike Devenney	Moray College

APOLOGIES

The meeting noted apologies from Martin Johnson and Ian Fraser	HIE Moray
Jim Johnston	Chamber of Commerce

IN ATTENDANCE

The Head of Direct Services, the Planning & Development Manager, the Community Planning & Development Manager, the Community Planning Officer, Neil Stables, Research and Information Officer (in respect of item 3) and Mrs S Kennedy, Committee Services Officer, Clerk to the meeting.

1. MINUTE OF MEETING DATED 13 NOVEMBER 2008

The Minute of the Meeting of the Wealthier and Fairer Strategic Group dated 13 November 2008 was submitted and approved.

2. WEALTHIER AND FAIRER GROUP PRIORITIES

During discussion of this item Mike Devenney entered the meeting.

Under reference to the meeting of this Group dated 21 August 2008 the Planning and Development Manager submitted a report rationalising the list of 29 actions, which constitutes the programme of work, set by this Group for the next 3 years. The Action plan is a reworking of the Moray 20/20 Action Plan and updates and identifies the outcomes to be achieved and the progress to date.

During discussions the Planning and Development Manager responded to concerns expressed by the Group in regard to the development of a Business Gateway in Moray, Leader Funding, Match Funding, Criteria and Timescales. He advised that a Leader Action Group (LAG) had been set up and the post for a Programme Manager had been advertised with a view to appointing a second Leader Officer once the Project Manager was in place. He further advised that the Planning and Development Team would support the LAG and a report on the Business Plan would be submitted to the meeting of the Moray Council on 21 March 2009 and that the Group would be provided with regular progress and monitoring reports.

Thereafter, the Group agreed that priority status for 2009/10 is recommended for the items contained within the report marked with a (P) namely:

- (a) Account Management with Growth Business
- (b) Business Gateway
- (c) Moray Towns Partnership
- (d) Buckie Regeneration
- (e) Moray's Connectedness.

3. PRESS ARTICLES

The Chair circulated a press article from the local newspaper to the Group in regard to the oil industry, highlighting the fact that oil related businesses did not have to be based in Aberdeen. Mike Devenney, Moray College highlighted another article in regard to the success of an art student at Moray College.

4. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT, QUARTER 3 UPDATES

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Policy Unit Manager providing the Group with an update on the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) Performance Indicators relating to the Wealthier & Fairer theme and the progress being made.

Neil Stables, Research and Information Officer updated the Group on the current position in regard to performance indicators for quarter 3.

During discussions the Group expressed concerns in regard to the type of indicators being used for measuring performance and wondered whether the type of indicator used should be 'Direction of Travel' or the 'Traffic Lights System.'

Following discussion the Group noted that the new Single Outcome Agreement for 2009/10 would be submitted to the Moray Council on 25 February 2009 and in light of the timescales and the major changes for Community Planning Partnerships the Planning & Development Manager agreed to investigate the types of indicators being used to ensure that there is closer alignment of the indicators with the new Single Outcome Agreement. A report will be submitted to the next meeting of this Group.

5. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT (2009-10) - PROGRESS UPDATE

The Community Planning and Development Manager updated the Committee on the progress to date with the Single Outcome Agreement for 2009 /10.

Thereafter, the Group noted that the final draft of the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) for 2009/10 would be submitted to the meeting of the Moray Council on the 25 February 2009 and thereafter to the Scottish Government by the end of February 2009. Negotiations with the Scottish Government would follow with the SOA 2009/10 being signed off by the end of May.

6. HIE MORAY 7 POINT PLAN

In the absence of a representative from HIE Moray, the Planning and Development Manager agreed to liaise with HIE following the meeting to request a written update on their 7 Point Plan for circulation to members of this group.

7. BUSINESS SEMINAR

During discussion the Planning and Development Manager updated the Group on the outcome of the recent Business Seminar on Connectivity. He advised that there had been a good reception at the meeting with the audience being willing to engage with the Council further to take forward the issues in regard to the A96/A95 and the Elgin By-pass.

The Group noted that the Transportation Manager had written to Stewart Stevenson, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change seeking answers to his technical questions and agreed that a report would be submitted to this Group on the response from the Minister.

Thereafter, the group noted:

- (a) that the seminar on Connectivity had been constructive and well attended;
- (b) that a meeting had been arranged with the Transport Minister for 12/03/09 to discuss the way forward on the Elgin By-Pass, A96 and A95, which will be attended by the Convener, Councillor Russell and two Officers;
- (c) that a meeting had been arranged with Richard Lochhead, MSP to meet with the By-Pass Committee; and
- (d) that a letter had been sent by the Transportation Manager seeking answers to his technical questions and that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of this group.

8. TOURISM STRATEGY/YEAR OF HOMECOMING

The Planning and Development Manager updated the Group on 'The Year of Homecoming' and the development of tourism in Moray. He stated that the Moray Council had already allocated £10,000 of funding to the 'Year of Homecoming Project which would hopefully be match funded by European

LEADER and other sources. He further advised that the Council was still awaiting an agreement by the Leader Local Action Group (LAG) for a programme application form and process to be drawn up.

Following discussions the Group agreed:

- (a) that the Planning and Development Manager would place an advert in the local paper within the next two weeks inviting interest;
- (b) that the applications be dealt with in two tranches of 4 weeks and 4 weeks to ensure that the applications are processed quickly; and
- (c) that the Community Planning & Development Manager arrange for an extraordinary meeting of the LAG seeking approval to proceed with the processing of applications.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Group will be held on Thursday 21 May 2009 within the Committee Room, Council Office, Elgin.

10. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The Group noted the Action Sheet from the meeting of the Community Planning Board, dated 5 February 2009.

11. AOCB

The Chair intimated to the Group that the Elgin Burns Club was holding a 'Son et Lumiere Tam o' Shanter' event as part of the Homecoming Programme and was seeking financial assistance.

The Chair raised concerns in regard to Tourism and in particular in regard to the Moray Official Guide, a booklet produced and funded by others giving free advertising for Moray. He intimated that he had been on the receiving end of irate calls from the public regarding incorrect information contained within the guide.

The Group agreed that the Council's involvement in the Moray Official Guide required to be stopped and that the matter should be referred to the Tourism Group with the view that any recommendations are referred to the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee.