



MINUTE OF MEETING OF WEALTHIER & FAIRER STRATEGIC GROUP

THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2010

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
Chief Executive	The Moray Council
Gordon Holland	HITRANS
Mike Devenney	Moray College
Calum McPherson	HIE Moray
L A Parker	Moray Chamber of Commerce

APOLOGIES

The meeting noted apologies from the Chief Executive, Moray Council, Alan Bodman, Federation of Small Businesses and Susan Chalmers, Skills Development Scotland.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Corporate Policy Unit Manager, the Head of Direct Services, the Planning & Development Manager, the Community Planning & Development Manager, the Fairer Scotland Manager, the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, S Flett, Project Officer and the Senior Committee Services Officer, Clerk to the meeting.

WELCOME

Prior to the commencement of business the meeting joined the Chairman in welcoming Lesley Ann Parker, Chief Executive, Moray Chamber of Commerce and Calum McPherson, HIE Moray to this their first meeting of the Group since being appointed as their organisation's representative to the Group.

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The meeting agreed to vary the order set down in the agenda in order to facilitate those presenting reports.

The meeting also noted that item 5 'Road Safety' had been withdrawn from the agenda due to the unavailability of a police representative due to an administrative error.

2. MINUTE OF MEETING DATED 19 SEPTEMBER 2009

During discussion on this item Councillor Wright joined the meeting.

The Minute of the Meeting of the Wealthier and Fairer Strategic Group dated 10 September 2009 was submitted and approved as an accurate record, subject to amending paragraph 5 of Branch 2 to read:-

'During discussion it was noted that progress is being made against all of the milestones with most of them having already met or are exceeding their expectations and targets with the exception of the Moray Towns Centre Regeneration Fund for which the first phase funding application had been unsuccessful'.

The meeting also noted that subsequent to the meeting on 10 September 2009 the first phase application for the Moray Towns Centre Regeneration Fund had been successful.

3. MORAY ASSISTED RECRUITMENT SCHEME

There was submitted a report by the Community Planning and Development Manager inviting the Group to note the progress of the Moray Assisted Recruitment Scheme.

The meeting noted that the Moray Assisted Recruitment Scheme [MARS] is aimed at young people aged 16 -24 and will provide a minimum of 2 years employment for 30 young people with the opportunity to gain an accredited SVQ level 2 as a minimum and in some cases level 3 qualifications. It is expected that the job opportunities would be provided by a number of local employers including Community Planning partners, private sector employers, the voluntary sector and social enterprise organisations. The Fairer Scotland Manager, spoke to the report and the meeting noted that by the deadline for the return of questionnaires on 17 December 2009, 38 responses had been received and, following a review, it was decided to follow-up on all 38 with job descriptions in the first instance bearing in mind that funding is for 30 places.

Following consideration the Group agreed to note the progress of the Moray Assisted Recruitment Scheme.

4. BUSINESS PANEL

There was submitted a report by Calum McPherson, Moray Area Manager, Highlands & Islands Enterprise [HIE] updating the Group on progress on structuring the Business Panel and the supplementary online panel which HIE has established and seeking endorsement of these proposals.

The Moray Area Manager spoke to the report and the meeting noted that the first meeting was scheduled to be held in March. He also gave a brief overview of the economic situation in Moray and on the actions being taken by HIE and its partners to try and alleviate the situation. Reference was also made to the 108 civilian job losses at RAF Kinloss as a result of the withdrawal of the present Nimrod aircraft in March, a year earlier than planned. Concerns were also expressed in regard to the potential economic impact to Moray resulting from the outcome of the Strategic Defence Review taking place later this year.

Following consideration the Group agreed:-

- (i) to endorse the proposed structure and occurrence of access panel meetings and noted the use of online access panel as an additional tool available to harvest business views;
- (ii) that Moray College would be invited to nominate a representative to sit on the Moray Business Panel and that consideration be given to inviting a representative from the Moray Business Gateway;
- (iii) that in respect of the Moray Council representatives a request for nominations be submitted to the Council; and
- (iv) that a report be submitted to the next meeting updating the Group on the actions being taken by HIE and its partners to try and alleviate some of the current economic problems within Moray, to include an update on the information on the benefits, both political and economic, of the RAF bases in Moray.

5. EMPLOYMENT OF TRAINEES

Under reference to the meeting of the Group dated 10 September 2009 there was submitted a joint report by the Senior Employee Development Adviser and the Planning and Development Manager defining how many trainee staff were employed by the Council.

During discussion the meeting noted that those currently appointed under the apprenticeship scheme could apply for permanent posts within the Council after one year on the understanding that they would still be required to complete the remainder of their two-year apprenticeship contract.

Following consideration the Group agreed to note that a further report will be presented to the Group on completion of the survey referred to in section 4.2 of the report recommending on the potential of joint working with the Apprenticeship Scheme.

6. HEALTH & TRANSPORT

There was submitted a report by the General Manager, MCHSCP updating the Group about the developments regarding health and transport, particularly where they relate to increasing sustainable transport solutions.

In the absence of the NHS Representative the Council's Transportation Manager gave a brief overview of the paper and the discussions which took place at the Greener Strategic Group meeting held earlier in the day.

The Group agreed to note:-

- (i) the developments in progressing joint working regarding health and transport issues which supports the objectives of the Wealthier & Fairer Strategic Group; and
- (ii) that it had been suggested at the earlier meeting of the Greener Strategic Group that the formation of a reference group should include Moray Council Member representation.

On the determination of this item Councillor Cree left the meeting.

7. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2009/10: QUARTERS 1 & 2 MONITORING STATEMENTS

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Policy Unit Manager providing the Group with an update against the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) Milestones relating to the Wealthier & Fairer theme and advising on the progress made against the 2008/09 unmet Actions relating to the Wealthier & Fairer theme. Details of the progress and unmet actions were appended to the report and a summary of performance was set out in Section 4 of the report.

During discussion Mike Devenney, Moray College, gave an update on the development of a Moray Life Sciences Centre and the meeting noted that everything was now in place except for appropriate funding and that once this agreed the project would proceed.

Following consideration the Group:

- (i) Scrutinised and noted the update of performance regarding the milestones, due to be completed by September 2009, relating to the Wealthier and Fairer theme that are laid down in the Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10;
- (ii) Scrutinised the progress being made against the 2008/09 unmet actions which were agreed to continue to be reported until action is completed; and
- (iii) Discussed the statistical information reported in its support of the qualitative milestone updates and its overall value and use to the Group.

8. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY PLANNING OPERATIONAL GROUPS

Under reference to Paragraph 3 of the minute of the meeting of the Group dated 10 September 2009 there was submitted a report by the Corporate Policy Unit Manager providing the Group with an updated list of its Operational Groups and the recommendations arising from the Community Planning Board in relation to all operational groups. Details of current Wealthier & Fairer Operational Groups were appended to the report.

Following consideration the Group:

- (i) that whilst there was no requirement to establish specific operational groups at this time the Group reserves the right to establish short-term groups on an as & when required basis or to request associated operational groups to undertake a specific task(s) on behalf of the Group; and
- (ii) that activity update reports be sought from the Groups referred to in the Appendix to the report for submission to the next meeting of the Group.

9. COMMUNITY PLANNING WEBSITE

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Policy Unit Manager updating the Group on the status of the Community Planning Website.

The Group agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress of the Community Planning Website as reported to the Community Engagement Group and their agreement that the website should be reported to the strategic groups as required, not as a standing item; and
- (ii) that Community Planning partners check the website and advise the Council's Corporate Policy Unit Manager if the information relative to their organisation is still relevant.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Group will be held on Thursday 18 March 2010 within the Committee Room, Council Office, Elgin.

11. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The Group noted the terms of the Action Sheet from the meeting of the Community Planning Board dated 19 November 2009.