

DSG/SESG(2020)M001

**DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP  
SOCIO ECONOMIC SUB GROUP**

**Minutes of the DSG Socio Economic sub group meeting held on Wednesday 29 January 2020 at 1330 hours in the Georgina lounge, Pentland Hotel.**

<b>Present:</b>	David Alexander	Wick & Thurso Trade Union Council (Chair)
	Derrick Milnes	DSG Co-opted member of the public
	David Flear	DSG Honorary member
	Roger Saxon	DSG Chair
	Fiona Levack	Caithness Chamber of Commerce
	Cllr Struan Mackie	The Highland Council (DSG Vice-chair)
	Ron Gunn	CHAT (Deputy sub group chair)
	Eann Sinclair	HIE
	Peter Faccenda	CNSRP
	Gillian Coghill	Buldoos Residents Group
	Murray Lamont	North Highland Tourism
<b>In addition:</b>	June Love	Dounreay Socio Economic and Stakeholder Relations Manager
	Dawn Clasper	DSG Minute Secretary, Dounreay

## **MINUTES**

### **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Davie Alexander, Chair of DSG socio economic sub group welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted that there was no representative from the NDA as Anna McConnell had now left the NDA and recruitment was underway for a Scottish wide post that will cover Dounreay, Chapelcross and Hunterston. John McNamara, NDA Head of Stakeholder Relations, had hoped to attend but could not due to other commitments. He noted that the Dounreay written report had also provided an update from NDA.

He also stated that, following the NDA summit, there had been a discussion at the Business meeting about having more connection with Chapelcross and Hunterston SSGs. Given that the NDA Socio economic/stakeholder relations would now cover all three sites he felt this was more important to ensure there was good dialogue between the three sites. June Love noted she had spoken with the SSG secretariat for Chapelcross and Hunterston to raise this although no formal request had been made. Roger Saxon noted that the Scottish Government held two meetings per year and it would be prudent to co-ordinate a meeting with the SSGs before or after that meeting. This was agreed.

**Action: DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A001: June Love to co-ordinate meeting with Chapelcross and Hunterston SSGs in April to coincide with the Scottish Government meeting.**

Davie Alexander also noted he had received a telephone from Stephen Young who had provided a short update on progress. Davie noted he would raise this later in the meeting.

Moving on, Davie welcomed Fiona Levack who was deputising from Trudy Morris, Chamber of Commerce.

## 2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- Trudy Morris – Fiona Levack deputising
- Alistair MacDonald
- John McNamara, NDA
- Steve Young
- Bob Earnshaw
- Cllr Matthew Reiss
- Sandy Mackie

Gillian Coghill noted that Linda Bremner had now stood down from the Association of Caithness Councillors. Ron Gunn noted that he would be attending this meeting and it was agreed that it would seek to identify a new representative to sit at DSG.

**Action: DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A002: Ron Gunn to raise representation for DSG at the next Association of Caithness Councils meeting**

## 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Davie Alexander noted that the minutes of the previous meeting (DSG/SESG(2019)M004 refers) had been endorsed by correspondence due to the postponement of the DSG public meeting in December because of the UK elections. He invited members to raise any issues from the minutes. No issues were raised.

## 4. STATUS OF ACTIONS

Davie Alexander noted the following actions:

- **DSG(2019)M004/A001:** June Love to speak with DSG Socio Economic sub group members to explore who would be interested in visiting the JOG Mill project and then identify a suitable date for visit. **Action complete.**

Members around the table registered their interest in visiting the JOG Mill project. June Love said she would speak with the project leader to identify a suitable date and would extent the invitation to all DSG members once identified.

**Action: DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A003: June Love to identify suitable date for a visit to the JOG Mill project and extent invitation to all DSG members.**

- **DSG(2019)M004/A002:** June Love to continue to progress date for Jacq Longrigg to visit Caithness to discuss skills. **Action ongoing:** Due to personal commitments Jacq Longrigg will now attend socio economic sub group in April 2020.
- **DSG (2019)M004/A004:** Anna MacConnell to provide update on projected timelines for Wick Harbour Authority high water gate following the meeting to be held. **Action ongoing:** Transfer action to Peter Faccenda, CNSRP Programme Manager to update at DSG Socio Economic sub group on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020. **Action complete.**

Peter Faccenda noted that discussions were ongoing and currently a technical review of the high water gate was being undertaken. It was noted that the costs had risen for this project as the design

of the gate had been reconsidered. It was agreed that this action would be closed as regular reporting was provided via the CNSRP update.

- **DSG(2019)M004/A005:** DSG Chairman to write to The Highland Council expressing frustration and disappointment regarding Caithness Horizons. **Action ongoing:** Letter sent on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019. A hold response had been received.

It was agreed that this action would be left open until a formal response from The Highland Council was forthcoming.

David Flear noted that at the last meeting it had been intimated that some of the funding for the Thurso Centre Improvements had been diverted to Caithness Horizons to support the maintenance of the building. Cllr Struan Mackie confirmed this was the case noting that any funding left over from the maintenance of CH would be diverted back into projects based in Caithness.

- **DSG(2019)M004/A006:** DSG Chairman to write to DSRL Heritage Officer to explore potential options for further discussion with the National Museums Scotland concerning artefacts belonging to DSRL. **Action complete:** Response from the Dounreay Heritage Officer confirmed that the artefact is owned by an artist and is not owned by DSRL. There is a replica model in Caithness Horizons. There is a Dounreay Heritage Advisory Panel that has been in existence since 2010 and meets annually. The MOU with this panel covers the issue of DSRL having the opportunity to comment on wording of display panels in terms of factual wording and this will continue. The next meeting is scheduled for 26 March and the DSG's concerns will be put on the agenda.

Davie Alexander noted his disappointment that there was nothing that could be done to encourage National Museums Scotland to reword their display on Energy.

- **DSG(2019)M004/A007:** DSG Secretariat to contact Linda Ross with a view to identifying a suitable date for her to present the outcome of her PhD in relation to Dounreay. **Action complete:** Linda Ross will attend March DSG public meeting to present her findings in relation to her PhD.
- **DSG(2019)M004/A009:** David Alexander to organise meeting with all relevant stakeholders in January/February 2020 to agree scope of work for economic reports to ensure STUC has clear requirements for support. **Action closed.**

It was noted that the NDA had intimated their intention to carry out a social impact assessment report of Dounreay. In line with this CNSRP were considering bringing forward the five year impact report so these reports were co-ordinated. The STUC had volunteered to support the collection of data for skills. It was agreed that these three strands of work should be co-ordinated and therefore it was agreed to close the action out at present until such times that a timeline for the impact report was known.

- **DSG(2019)M004/A010:** DSG Secretariat to bring forward information on Rural Communities (Scotland) Bill for discussions at the DSG business meeting with a view to drafting a response for further input from all DSG members. **Action complete:** See DSG(2020)C003.

Davie Alexander noted that all other outstanding actions sat with the Site Restoration sub group and invited questions on any of the completed actions relating to Socio economics.

It was noted that an update of a recent meeting of the Community Sports Hub had been provided and had intimated that a further meeting was being held this evening. Ron Gunn noted he had attended the EGM on the 15 January and it appeared there was a lack of capacity between those meeting to identify and take forward potential funding streams for this project. A discussion then ensued about whether DSRL could provide some kind of support to move this project forward. June Love noted that there was a further meeting this evening and therefore would be provided an update following that. Ron Gunn said he hoped to attend this evening and would report back to the group once the outcome of the meeting was known. [Secretary's note: Ron Gunn reported back and this would be discussed at the Business meeting to discuss next steps.]

**Action: DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A004: June Love to put update from Community Sports Hub meeting held on 29 January to the DSG Business meeting for discussion.**

David Flear noted, that while not an action, a recent press release from Margaret Davidson, Leader of The Highland Council regarding the potential for a City Region Deal 2. There was a lot of discussion around the table noting disappointment of the total support provided to Caithness and North Sutherland from the original City Region Deal. The discussion moved to the potential of City Region Deal 2 noting that it was unlikely that any subsequent deal would not be set up until the original City Region Deal projects were complete – this was not expected for a further 7 years. It was also noted that there was still deals to be put in place for some local authorities under the first scheme. In summary, members were disappointed that no projects from Caithness/NS had been taken forward given the priority status of the area with the rundown of Dounreay.

## **5. DOUNREAY COMMUNITY FUND REQUESTS**

Davie Alexander noted the current funding applications and reminded members to declare an interest if there was any involvement from members in these projects. The applications were then reviewed and recommendations made.

## **6. DOUNREAY SOCIO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES**

Davie Alexander noted that a written update had been received – DSG(2020)P006 referred. He invited June Love to pick up key highlights from the paper. Of note, June Love reported:

- NDA continued to develop its new socio economic strategy.
- Funding for this year for socio economic projects was low for this financial year. This was due to a number of factors of funding being held for certain projects and with delays or setbacks meant that the funding was now drawn down. As examples, NDA had asked DSRL to support the potential to fund the Space Hub Sutherland project (NDA decision will not be until next financial year therefore funding was deferred), Caithness Horizons had been due to re-open but due to maintenance schedule would not now re-open until after April 2020 (therefore funding would be required into next financial year). While June Love noted this was disappointing there was good reasons to hold the funding to allow projects identified for this year to be funded while still having the capacity to fund future projects in financial year 2020/21.
- North Highland College had bid for funding to establish a Skills development/research centre to support development of battery storage. DSRL had agreed to provide funding support to this. Unfortunately NHC had just been informed that their bid had been unsuccessful.
- Nucleus had been awarded Accredited Archive status and becomes the 10<sup>th</sup> service based in Scotland to achieve this.

June Love noted that the written report still stood and therefore rather than picking out further topics she would take the paper as read and invited questions.

- Derrick Milnes asked what the status was with Simon Tucker, NDA attending a meeting to provide an update on the capacity of Nucleus. June Love noted that Simon Tucker had been due to attend the December meeting that had been cancelled and had intimated that he would be available for the April sub group. David Flear reminded members that this was in relation to a discussion around the capacity of Nucleus to continue to accept some records. He had met with Simon Tucker who had assured him that there would only be one archive and that Nucleus had been built to allow for further expansion if required. David Flear felt that given the time it had taken to identify the funding for Nucleus this was something that would need to be kept on the radar.
- Davie Alexander noted that further to his earlier comment re Stephen Young, he had had a good discussion with him on the performance plan, workforce transition and people plans. He had intimated to Stephen that he was not required to attend these meetings on a regular basis but would be invited as appropriate. Davie Alexander also noted that Stephen Young had provided a verbal update and had confirmed that there would be no significant job losses during 2020. It had been agreed that Stephen Young would continue to update the socio economic sub group chair prior to the sub group meetings taking place. Where appropriate he would then be invited along to the sub group to provide an update when there was something substantial to report.
- June Love noted that the Japanese project with Thurso High School was going ahead and it had now been agreed that a display of this project would be sent to Japan for display alongside some Caithness local produce. The school project was being led by Craig Brown with support from Marie Mackay and Cllr Struan Mackie. David Flear asked whether the Japanese secondee was still at Dounreay and June Love confirmed that he was. David Flear suggested that he be invited to a sub group meeting so he could see for himself the level of engagement between the site and the community.

There being no further questions raised, Davie Alexander thanked June Love for the written update.

## **7. CNSRP UPDATE**

Davie Alexander note that a written report had been provided in advance of the meeting – DSG(2020)P007 refers. Of note, Peter Faccenda reported:

- The joint Executive, Advisory and Delivery groups had met all together recently. This had been a fairly positive meeting.
- Progress with BOWL continued at Wick harbour.
- The business case for a PSO (public service obligation) for Wick JOG airport was nearing completion. This was being led by the Caithness Chamber, on behalf of CNSRP. It was noted that the Chamber were simply the conduit to manage this piece of work and did not make any profit for the Chamber itself. The PSO case which was in the last stages of being finalised demonstrated a need for partner funding to underpin seats on aircrafts and discussions had started with partner organisations as well as looking at funding streams such as the Coastal Community fund. Once the business case had been submitted to Transport Scotland there would be communications required to ensure everyone understood got behind the initiative.

There followed a discussion on the potential funding streams that could be applied for in the county. David Flear noted that he had received information through the Scottish Hydro Electric Community Trust on SSE community investment and would share this information. [Post meeting note: the information was provided to the Secretary for passing to CNSRP.]

- As noted earlier, it had been disappointing to hear that North Highland College had been unsuccessful in its funding bid for the Battery North project. The NHC was now considering its next steps in terms of this project.
- The Tourism project on the CNSRP programme was still to be scoped out. It was noted that there was suggestions of parking meters along the NC500 route and members wondered what the impact would be on this. Cllr Struan Mackie noted that this was something still under discussion with HC.

No further questions or issues were raised under the CNSRP update.

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

Davie Alexander noted that the following correspondence had been received since the last meeting.

- DSG(2020)C001 – NDA SSG Brief December
- DSG(2020)C002 – Letter to DRS
- DSG(2020)C003 – DSG response to rural mainland communities bill
- DSG(2020)C005 – NDA SSG Brief January
- DSG(2020)C006 – DRS response to C002

It was noted that a joint letter from DSG and the Caithness Transport Forum had been sent to Direct Rail Services voicing disappointment at the lack of progress with the Georgemas commercial freight trial. A response to the letter had been received and that in itself had been disappointing. Members felt that there needed to be clarity on the future of the crane once the operational requirement was complete. It was agreed that it would be useful for the Caithness Transport Forum to go back to DRS to seek further clarification and an indication of when the freight trial was likely to be take place. It was also suggested that Hi-Trans should be contacted to look at whether they believe that commercial freight being delivered to Georgemas was likely to be viable.

**Action: DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A005: Caithness Transport Forum (via Caithness Chamber of Commerce) to write back to DRS noting disappointment and seeking further clarification of timelines and the future of the crane. Contact would also be made to Hi-Trans for advice.**

## 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Davie Alexander invited members to raise any other business. Of note:

- David Flear noted that he would retire from DSG at the AGM in March. He noted that he sat on the Nucleus Advisory Board, on behalf of DSG, and therefore a replacement would be required. June Love noted that following the AGM a review of DSG representation at all meetings would be considered.
- David Flear also asked whether, following his retirement at the DSG AGM, was he expected to stay on to the public meeting which was held straight after the AGM or should he simply leave following the AGM. June Love noted that there was a couple of logistics that needed clarify for the switch from the AGM meeting to the public meeting and would raise at the business meeting

for clarity.

**Action: DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A006: June Love to raise administration issues around AGM at the Business meeting for clarification.**

- Davie Alexander noted that the NDA had published the NDA Socio Economic Impact report for 2018/19 and suggested that members may wish to read through this document and provide comment where appropriate. This was agreed with a deadline to receive comments by end of February 2020.

**Action: DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A007: All DSG Socio economic sub group members to provide comment to June Love on the NDA Socio Economic Impact Report, 2018/19 by end of February.**

- Davie Alexander reminded members that the next meeting was the AGM which would start promptly at 1830 hours and would be followed by the public meeting at 1900 hrs. Roger Saxon intimated his intention to stand down as chair and members were encouraged to consider whether they wished to volunteer for one of the official roles. June Love noted that the AGM would be on the next business meeting agenda to discuss the logistics whatever was agreed all DSG members would be notified prior to the AGM taking place.
- Ron Gunn stated that the CEO of the NHS Highland had resigned and therefore would be looking for a replacement. Workshops had been held to look at the options for the redesign and also improvements to Caithness General Hospital. While still a long way to go there was encouraging signs that this would progress.
- Ron Gunn stated that the Thurso Community Council, with agreement from The Highland Council, were considering supporting local groups with some funding for worthwhile causes. This would be supported by funding already in Thurso Community Council's bank account.
- Fiona Levack noted the recent press coverage of the downgrading of the airport due to the air traffic control being centralised in Inverness. She reported that Wick JOG airport would have an increase in personnel as there was a requirement for Flight Information Service Officers as these would still be required.

Before closing, Davie Alexander commented that moving into the next financial year DSG had a lot of work to get through and therefore focussing on key topics would be key. He felt that it would be useful to re-assert that when senior NDA and PBO personnel were visiting the area it would be useful for them to arrange to meet with DSG representatives as part of their scheduled programme. June Love said she would feed this back to both NDA and PBO.

**Action: DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A008: June Love to feed back to NDA and PBO that when senior personnel were visiting Caithness they included a meeting with DSG representatives.**

There being no further business, Davie Alexander thanked everyone for their input and formally closed the meeting.

**David Alexander  
DSG Socio Economic sub group chair  
2 February 2020**

**ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**

**DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A001:** June Love to co-ordinate meeting with Chapelcross and Hunterston SSGs in April to co-incide with the Scottish Government meeting.

**DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A002:** Ron Gunn to raise representation for DSG at the next Association of Caithness Councils meeting

**DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A003:** June Love to identify suitable date for a visit to the JOG Mill project and extent invitation to all DSG members.

**DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A004:** June Love to put update from Community Sports Hub meeting held on 29 January to the DSG Business meeting for discussion.

**DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A005:** Caithness Transport Forum (via Caithness Chamber of Commerce) to write back to DRS noting disappointment and seeking further clarification of timelines and the future of the crane. Contact would also be made to Hi-Trans for advice.

**DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A006:** June Love to raise administration issues around AGM at the Business meeting for clarification.

**DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A007:** All DSG Socio economic sub group members to provide comment to June Love on the NDA Socio Economic Impact Report, 2018/19 by end of February.

**DSG/SESG(2020)M001/A008:** June Love to feed back to NDA and PBO that when senior personnel where visiting Caithness they included a meeting with DSG representatives.