

**DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP
SOCIO ECONOMIC SUB GROUP**

Minutes of the DSG Socio Economic Sub Group held on Wednesday 26 January 2022 at 1330 hrs via Teams.

Present:	Davie Alexander	Chair (Wick and Thurso Trade Union Council)
	Roger Saxon	DSG Honorary member
	Trudy Morris	Caithness Chamber of Commerce
	Sandy Mackie	Scrabster Harbour Trust
	Cllr Struan Mackie	DSG Chair
	Ron Gunn	CHAT
	Murray Lamont	North Highland Tourism
	Peter Faccenda	CNSRP Programme Manager
	Gillian Coghill	Buldoo Residents Group
	Cllr Willie Mackay	The Highland Council

In addition:	June Love	Dounreay Socio Economic Manager
	Jamie Reed	NDA Director of Socio Economics
	Neil Smith	NDA Business Development
	Dawn Clasper	DSG Minute Secretary, Dounreay

MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Davie Alexander welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year. He welcomed Jamie Reed and Neil Smith to the meeting noting that some members may have met Jamie when he had visited Caithness in the first week of taking up his new post. He also thanked Neil for his continued involvement and support of the local socio economic activities.

2. APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Apologies had been received from the following:

- Debbie Murray
- Eann Sinclair
- Cllr Matthew Reiss
- Dave Wallace, NDA

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Davie Alexander noted that the minutes of the previous meeting – DSG/SESG(2021)M03 – had been endorsed at the public meeting held in December. He invited members to raise any issues from the minutes. No issues were raised.

4. STATUS OF ACTIONS

The status of actions had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Of note:

- DSG(2021)M04/A002: Dave Wallace, NDA to identify a date for Jamie Reed, NDA Director of Socio Economics to provide a presentation to DSG on NDA's social impact policy. **Action complete:** this had been identified for the June public meeting.

- DSG(2021)M04/A016: DSG Business meeting members to write down key principles that DSG would like to see bidders meet for the MOD contract. **Action ongoing:** The business meeting had met and discussed the need for input by all members. Therefore a meeting would be organised for February for DSG members only to discuss this (and the DSG review).

Davie Alexander noted that the rest of the ongoing actions related to the Site Restoration Sub Group and would be progressed at that meeting.

5. **COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS**

Davie Alexander noted that there were no applications to review. He added that this was a first since he had joined DSG that there had been no applications tabled, noting however that there had been some time sensitive applications that had been dealt with outside the meeting.

6. **DOUNREAY SOCIO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES**

Before inviting Jamie Reed to provide an update, Davie Alexander asked for clarification from NDA who would be attending these meetings in the future noting that a request had also been made for a written update for each meeting. Jamie Reed apologised for the oversight noting it should not have happened. He confirmed he would attend these meetings (diary permitting) and in his absence Neil Smith would deputise.

June Love noted that given DSRL was back under the One NDA it would make sense to provide one written report to DSG that could provide updates on NDA Corporate / NDA Operating Company. This was agreed.

Davie Alexander invited Jamie Reed to provide an update. Of note:

- Jamie Reed was expecting to be back up in Caithness very soon and would confirm dates as soon as possible. In his first day in his new post he had travelled up to Caithness to get a feel for Caithness and North Sutherland and the community's ambitions for the future. The area was home to a significance nuclear presence on its doorstep in terms of opportunities and challenges. He thanked those he had met on his first visit noting he had received a fantastic welcome and was looking forward to helping support the socio economic agenda for C&NS going forward.
- Looking towards some future activities on the horizon he had been taken by the Scot Wind announcement noting there could be huge potential for both Scrabster and Wick in terms of significant economic activity. He and Neil had received a recent update on the progress of the spaceport from Roy Kirk.
- On a wider note, everything that the NDA (and its Operating Companies) do has to be evidence based and data driven. To that end we are working on the roll out of the social impact studies across all the sites within the NDA estate and the Dounreay study had been broadened out to include CNSRP and the Vulcan site also.
- He had been delighted to visit Scrabster Harbour and held this up as a good example of NDA investment (alongside, CNSRP partner HIE) and the development of the pier had been delivered to time and cost.
- He and Mark Rouse had recently attended a CNSRP meeting with the CNSRP Chair, and representatives from HIE and HC to discuss the ongoing support for the additional resources

within CNSRP. It had been a productive meeting and recognised the resource had been positive over the last year.

- There were a lot of ‘words’ being banded about – social value, socio economics and sustainability and discussions often got confused as each bleeds into each other.

On sustainability, this was defined by the United Nations and identified 17 development goals including things like, air and water quality, gender equality, educational equality, etc. The NDA has now developed a sustainability strategy which has been flowed down to the sites and consideration is being given to how this is driven into the daily work. An NDA Beacon project had commenced to start the job of defining this.

On social value, the SV Act for Public Services has been active since 2012. Any organisation that is publicly funded (including schools, hospitals, etc) commits them to delivering the greater social value in which they are based, how people are employed, how goods and services are procured, etc. The beacon project would be looking at how goods/services are procured. Socio economics in the broader sense is about the relationships with NDA and the community and understanding these aspirations to co-create positive interventions.

In essence, social value and socio economics are inside the umbrella of sustainability. Jamie Reed noted he was looking forward to talking around this subject at the DSG meeting in June.

- NDA was also working with stakeholders to look at potential support to the airport, Wick harbour and the Space port. He noted that, on the PSO, there was not an easy answer and at present was still awaiting a clear request from the Highland Council. There was a lot of focus and attention on this project.
- Consultants on behalf of NDA were currently carrying out Social Impact Studies for each of the NDA sites. Once these were complete it would be useful to look at the Dounreay and Magnox sites that are within Scotland to look at any synergies between the three sites.
- Neil Smith noted that a lot of his focus was working towards year end. The process for funding applications meant that applications over £200k went through a One NDA Panel and this has allowed more shared learning across the sites.

Davie Alexander thanked both for their input noting there was a lot of information provided. He agreed that clarity on social impact/socio economics was required and looked forward to discussing this in more detail at the June public meeting. He invited questions from members.

- Roger Saxon stated he was pleased to hear someone talk about the differences between SV and SE as this would be important going forward when considering the Vulcan decommissioning contract recognising that the social value criteria sometimes does not necessarily mean local value.

Jamie Reed agreed noting that the lack of clarity was not lost on him.

- Peter Faccenda noted that when talking about the difference between social value and socio economics it was worth noting that the MOD’s approach varies from the NDA’s. He believed that it was important to translate the area’s needs into measures of what we would like to

achieve going forward. This will be considered as part of CNSRP review to ensure as much alignment as possible.

Jamie Reed agreed adding that, for him, the most important impacts would be the number of jobs.

- Neil Smith added that something apparent across the NDA estate was the requirement for additional resources for local partners to help take projects forward.

Davie Alexander noted this was something DSG regularly discussed. In terms of CNSRP, it had been recognised that it was a big ask to have one person trying to take things forward with the partner organisations and the support of Dounreay for additional resources into CNSRP had been very successful in that it allowed a focussed resource to make much faster progress. The application that was submitted for the Fusion (STEP) reactor was a great example of having the flexibility to progress quickly.

Gillian Coghill agreed noting that there was a lot of volunteer fatigue in the county with a huge rise in requests for development officers to support local projects. Peter Faccenda noted that HIE had secured funding, via the Community Support team, last year to support development officers.

- Neil Smith noted that, as previously mentioned, NDA were in discussion with other CNSRP partners regarding the continued support of the CNSRP support. From his perspective, it would be good to have the views of the DSG.

Davie Alexander stated he felt that the resource had been very positive in helping to move projects forward quicker and also providing the correct experience to ensure that new business cases were being developed.

- In terms of the PSO, Davie Alexander asked when NDA expected to receive a request of support for the airport.

Trudy Morris noted her frustration at the progress of the airport PSO. She added she had sent Highland Council an email re-iterating that there was now an urgent need to sit down with partners to look at any gaps within the funding requirements. She had received an invitation to a meeting on Friday but NDA or Dounreay had not been invited. She added she would request additional invites.

Jamie Reed stated that one of his first impressions when visiting the area was the strong desire and togetherness of the community.

There being no further questions, Davie Alexander thanked Jamie and Neil for their input. Jamie and Neil then left the meeting.

- Davie Alexander felt that this had been the most in-depth discussion they had held with NDA since the sub group had been set up.

Dounreay update

Davie Alexander noted that a written report had been provided by Dounreay – DSG(2022)P002 referred. He invited June Love to provide a brief update. Of note, June Love reported:

- She would take the paper as read.
- Since the last meeting:
 - Work was ongoing for year-end financial reporting

- The socio economic plan for 2022 onwards and annual review of 2021/22 was under development.
- There had been a couple of early enquiries for funding. At this point no further applications had been received.
- The Organisation Excellence Director was being re-organised to include sustainability. This is to develop the ongoing work to align socio economics/social impact under the sustainability umbrella.

There were no questions raised and Davie Alexander thanked June Love for a good report with lots of detail.

7. UPDATES ON SOCIO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Davie Alexander noted that CNSRP had provided a written update – DSG(2022)P008 refers. Peter Faccenda stated he would take the paper as read and reported:

- The announcement of the Scot Wind leasing round, stating the size of the prize was substantial and could be completely transformational. A collaborative working group with Scrabster and Wick harbours had been set up to look to maximise benefits for the area.
- A number of meetings will be held shortly around the North Highland Space Cluster to take the strategy recommendations and turn into a working action plan. The full business case was expected to go to the HIE Board in spring.
- The hydrogen project continued to be developed and a piece of work, carried out by Jacobs secondee on transport hydrogen conversion would be published shortly.
- The PSO had already been mentioned and HC were nearing completion of the tender evaluations. The detail of the tender bids was awaited.
- Work to improve the Naver Bridge (North Sutherland) had commenced and this would support transport conditions for the NC500 and the spaceport.

Davie Alexander thanked Peter Faccenda for his update, noting that the Scot Wind leasing announcements could have a massive impact on the area. He noted that Cromarty Port Authority had recently announced construction of a production facility which would have the capability of building parts of the tower structure. It was unclear as to whether they had contracts but the build would see Cromarty well placed to manufacture components.

Davie Alexander asked about the shared apprenticeship project which was shown as 'late' in the written report. Trudy Morris responded that this project had been severely delayed because of Covid and had been based around the Dounreay Decommissioning Services Framework companies looking at options to support this. Because the work on site had slowed down due to Covid it had not been progressed as quickly as anyone would have liked. However, there were indications from some of the consortia that they were keen to look at this model. This would be revisited shortly.

There being no further questions, Davie Alexander thanked Peter Faccenda for his update.

No further updates were provided.

8. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

Davie Alexander noted that a draft response from DSG to NDA on the draft business case had been circulated to all members for their final comment. He asked members if they wished to comment or provide additional comments noting that the consultation closed on the 31 January 2022. Members confirmed there were no further comments or additions to make. Gillian Coghill stated she would also request this from the Site Restoration Sub Group meeting (due to be held this evening) to allow time to finalise the letter and submit.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Before opening up to members, Davie Alexander noted the following:

- DSG(2022)C054 was the response from MSP, Maree Todd re the PSO funding for Wick/JOG airport. Personally, he had found the response very disappointing. Following discussion it was agreed to await the outcome of the PSO tender evaluation from Highland Council to explore what the extent was, if any, of funding gaps. This was agreed. It was also noted that there was a new Scot Gov Transport Minister and that an invite should be extended to them to visit the area.
- The North Highland College had issued out a consultation on the potential merger of NHC with Lews Castle and West Highland College. He noted that Debbie Murray had been invited to provide an update on this to allow members to understand the extent of the merger but was not available to attend. There was a discussion around this subject including discussions on the driver for this merger and whether it meant that UHI was not working. It was also noted that with mergers efficiencies were the next thing to be looked at which could potentially cost local jobs. It was recognised that there had been a statement about no job losses at NHC but there was a nervousness around whether that could be sustained. Roger Saxon noted that the questionnaire was an on-line one and therefore difficult for DSG to respond as one group. June Love said she would ask Debbie Murray for the questionnaire so that this could be circulated to all members in order to provide a collective response.

Action: DSG/SESG(2022)M004/A01: June Love to request questionnaire for North Highland College proposed merger to allow a combined DSG response to be submitted.

- Mention was made regarding the Young Engineer Group and the SSG guidance that had been published. An article in The Ferret outlining NDA and SSGs reluctance to take part was published. Members found this extremely disappointing given that the group who had carried out the review had not reached out to DSG to ask for their views. It was also disappointing that a DSG member had chosen to respond in the article without alerting DSG nor mentioning the review currently being undertaken. Cllr Struan Mackie said he would not labour on the point but the DSG review was well underway with the report due to be provided next week. He wanted to make it clear that the DSG business group was taking this seriously and had made a commitment to look at the recommendations. He had found it disappointing to see in writing suggestions that the DSG was not doing their job.

Davie Alexander then opened up to members for any other business. Of note:

- Cllr Struan Mackie noted the recent NFLA press comments on Scotland's lack of appetite for new nuclear. In his opinion, this was a 'tinpot' pressure group and this was an insult to our community that is nuclear. He noted, in a personally capacity, he had made a complaint to the omnibus man.

- It was also noted that the business meeting would call for a meeting in February with all DSG members to go through the DSG review recommendations and agree a way forward. As alluded to in earlier discussions this meeting would also take the opportunity to discuss the key principles of engaging with the companies wishing to compete for the Vulcan decommissioning programme.

Action: DSG/SESG(2022)M004/A002: Dawn Clasper to co-ordinate a date in February with all DSG members to discuss DSG review and key principles for engaging with contractors for Vulcan contract.

- The AGM and public meeting was due to be held on 23 March and it was hoped that this would be held 'in person' at the Pentland Hotel, Thurso. For the public meeting a presentation on the three year work plan for Dounreay would be provided by Mark Rouse and a request to follow this up with a presentation on the shaft and silo had been made.
- Ron Gunn noted that he and Roger Saxon had attended the NHS Redesign meeting and there had been a verbal re-assurance that the redesign work would continue. Confirmation in writing was awaited. Roger Saxon had suggested that more communication was required following these meetings to allow the general public to understand what progress was being made. It was noted that the outline business case would be finalised at the end of this year with a full business case coming forward in 2024. Members agreed that communication would be essential to ensure everyone was up to date on progress.

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
31 January 2022

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

DSG/SESG(2022)M004/A01: June Love to request questionnaire for North Highland College proposed merger to allow a combined DSG response to be submitted.

DSG/SESG(2022)M004/A002: Dawn Clasper to co-ordinate a date in February with all DSG members to discuss DSG review and key principles for engaging with contractors for Vulcan contract.