

**DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP  
SOCIO ECONOMIC SUBGROUP**

**Minutes of the DSG Socio Economic Subgroup held on Wednesday 25 January 2023  
at 1330 hrs in the Pentland Hotel, Thurso / via MS Teams.**

**Present:** David Alexander Wick and Thurso Trades Council (chair)  
Peter Faccenda Focus North Programme Manager (deputy subgroup chair)  
Roger Saxon DSG Site Restoration Subgroup Deputy Chair  
Giles Huby UHI North Highland  
Trudy Morris Caithness Chamber of Commerce  
Sandy Mackie Scrabster Harbour Trust  
Eann Sinclair Highlands and Islands Enterprise  
Gillian Coghill Buldoo Residents Group

**In addition:** Tina Wrighton Stakeholder & External Relations Manager, DSRL  
David Calder Head of Sustainability & Socio Economics, DSRL  
Magnus Davidson Socio Economics Manager, DSRL  
Jeremy Gilmour SE Business Development, NDA  
Dawn Clasper DSG Minute Secretary, DSRL  
Alan Scott Nuvia  
Stephen Sutherland JGC

**MINUTES**

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

David Alexander welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Magnus Davidson, the recently appointed Dounreay Socio Economics Manager. He also introduced Alan Scott of Nuvia, and Stephen Sutherland of JGC, in attendance to discuss the supply chain.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from:

- Murray Lamont, North Highland Tourism
- Cllr Struan Mackie, DSG Chair

**3. SUPPLY CHAIN**

David Alexander noted that Trudy Morris had written to the DSG to ask if two representatives from the supply chain could make a presentation to the socioeconomic subgroup, this was agreed at a previous business meeting.

Trudy Morris gave an introduction, noting various meetings throughout last year with Dounreay Exco, and highlighting Caithness Chamber of Commerce (CCoC) members concern with Dounreay supply chain activity, in addition to apprehension in raising it publicly.

A presentation on the perspective of the supply chain were provided by Alan Scott, Nuvia, and Stephen Sutherland, JCG. Although representing two separate supply chain companies, the presentation was given on behalf of the supply chain as a whole. See DSG(2023)C001 for presentation.

David Alexander thanked Alan Scott and Stephen Sutherland for their presentation and opened up for question from members. The following summarises the main discussion points:

Trudy Morris highlighted that a key issue was communication from Dounreay to the supply chain and helping the supply chain to understand the process behind some of the decision making. Trudy Morris also raised recruitment in relation to specialist roles currently being advertised and asked why these could not be put out as contracts, recognising that although expertise may not be found locally, it may be found regionally.

David Alexander noted that he was aware of some of the issues the supply chain was facing. He suggested that the Socio Economic subgroup was in place for the community and more communication with the supply chain is needed. He noted the importance of supply chain apprenticeship training, to the detriment of the community if taken in house at Dounreay.

The supply chain representatives and a number of members agreed that labour found in the supply chain could be brought into Dounreay when needed and utilised elsewhere in the community when not, highlight cost savings for the taxpayer, and ability to quickly pivot into new industries such as the renewable sector.

Gillian Coghill fully supported the previous comments and highlighted concern around the local supply chain having to compete with higher Dounreay wages and salaries. She also expressed concern of people being lost to other sites through the merger with Magnox and questioned the impact of the closure of Dounreay on schools and UHI North Highland.

Eann Sinclair noted agreement and that Highlands and Islands Enterprise were seeing a detrimental impact to client organisations from the movement of staff supply chain companies into Dounreay. He highlighted that this was not sustainable for the supply chain and that the message needed pushed to senior staff in the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

Comments on the wider sustainability of the supply chain were discussed by the supply chain representatives and members. Stephen Sutherland expressed concern on lack of communication in changes but highlighted opportunities in the future, especially for young people. Alan Scott identified advantages to the area in having NDA funding and Dounreay work, as well as the wider skills opportunities, however this could be better taken advantage of.

Roger Saxon asked why Dounreay would take on people, along with liability for pensions and pay, as the interim end state approaches and highlighted issues on career advancement in supply chain companies when senior positions are taken in house to Dounreay.

David Alexander rounded up the discussion and noted an action on the subgroup to present the supply chain concerns to Exco. It was noted that time had limited the ability to deliver the entire presentation which included points for discussion in moving forward.

**Action: DSG/SESG(2023)M04/A001: DSG Socio Economic sub group to write to Mark Rouse and ask for a meeting with the supply chain and present their presentation.**

He thanked Alan Scott and Stephen Sutherland for their time and they left the meeting.

#### **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

David Alexander noted that the minutes of the last meeting – DSG/SESG(2022)M003, October 2022 – had been endorsed at the public meeting held in December 2022. He invited members to raise any issues. No issues were raised.

#### **5. STATUS OF ACTIONS**

David Alexander noted that the status of actions had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Of note and relating to the socio economic subgroup the following actions were discussed.

- DSG(2022)M03/A027: Jeremy Gilmour, NDA, to speak to appropriate people in NDA to consider a policy on buying 'fair trade' in terms of sustainability to allow the collation of figures from across the site.

Jeremy Gilmour noted that the NDA continue to provide more information on sustainability in the supply chain, that there are beacon projects that focus on the issue that are due to finish by the FY end, and that he is confident they will be able to provide this information. The NDA are exploring the adoption of new policy requirements in a similar way to public and private sector organisations. The intention is that following the FY end, data and key performance indicators will begin to be recorded within contracts allowing standardised reporting of sustainability metrics by the end of the next financial year.

- DSG(2022)M03/A031: DSG to ask Dounreay what their costs are before any decommissioning work is carried out. **Action ongoing:** Emailed Neil Cook Finance Director.

David Alexander noted that the DSG Business Meeting had a verbal update on the question on the 19th of January, this would be confirmed with Neil Cook Finance Director in writing.

- DSG(2022)M003/A037: Cllr Struan Mackie to write to Josh George for a definition of what is a critical role. **Action ongoing.**

David Alexander noted there was a verbal response, and this would be asked to be confirmed in writing by Struan Mackie.

## 6. DOUNREAY COMMUNITY FUND REQUESTS

David Alexander noted that the Community Fund report had been circulated in advance. He reminded members to declare any conflicts prior to discussion on any of the applications. No conflicts were recorded.

Funding applications were reviewed, decisions were made on each application.

## 7. DOUNREAY SOCIO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

David Alexander stated that a written update had been provided - DSG(2023)P003. Magnus Davidson, Socio Economics Manager, was invited to provide key highlights from the paper.

The following update was provided by Magnus Davidson. Of note:

- In respect to the merger with Magnox on 1 April 2023, Dounreay do not envisage any change to the socio economic activity in the year 23/24.
- Dounreay Socio Economic plan for year 2022/23 was postponed due to structural and staffing changes. The NDA will be developing a new Socio Economic Strategy in 2023 and are in early discussions on the alignment of the new Dounreay Socio Economic Plan.

- Dounreay have worked closely with Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership (CNSRP) on their rebranding as Focus North with the relaunch on 8 February at the Weigh Inn, Thurso.
- The CNSRP Support Hub project progress is marked as amber on the funding matrix due to underspend. This is due to two staff posts, the Business Development Manager and Project Manager, not currently being occupied. Peter Faccenda, CSNSRP Programme Manager, noted that the Business Development role will be advertised after the Focus North Event has taken place and discussion is still ongoing regarding the Project Manager role.
- A number of projects are due to be successfully closed out shortly and highlighted in the report.
- The NDA have received an application for space hub Sutherland, and this was endorsed by the OneNDA Socio Economic Group, with the application due to be appraised fully later in January.
- The NDA and HIE are in discussion with Wick Harbour Authority in relation to the possibility of funding for future development.
- In the last quarter Dounreay has awarded 16 contracts to 8 Caithness suppliers with a total value of over £1M.
- There have been a range of STEM activities which have included UHI North Highland.
- Applications for the graduate development programme closed on 31<sup>st</sup> of December.
- Liam Gordon has been nominated for the Graduate of the Year Award by the National Skills Academy for Nuclear (NSAN).
- Vacation Student placements and Dounreay apprenticeship advertisement are currently being advertised for 2023.
- Dounreay hosted visit of a group of Japanese students and lecturers, led by Professor Okamoto, and Dr Tanaka, and met with our teams and stakeholders.
- Dounreay Staff held an appeal and raised £4,527 during December for the benefit of three local charities at Christmas, Caithness FM Children's Toy Appeal, Caithness foodbanks and Listening Ear Caithness. DSRL provided £3,000 match funding, resulting in each charity receiving approximately £2,500 (subject to JustGiving admin costs).

David Alexander thanked Magnus Davison for his updated and asked Jeremy Gilmour if he would like to update anything from the NDA.

- Jeremy Gilmour added that the Space Hub Sutherland was currently going through committee approval however there were no updates to the timeline.

## **8. FOCUS NORTH UPDATE**

David Alexander noted that a written Focus North update had been provided – DSG(2023)P004. He invited Peter Faccenda to provide key highlights from the paper.

Peter Faccenda noted that Focus North has reevaluated their approach to working as a partnership with the aim of improvement, although the basic structure of an Executive Board, Delivery Group, and Advisory Board, will continue. A relaunch event is to be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February with over 100 people set to attend. This will be followed with a roadshow to Holyrood and Westminster to highlight the opportunities in the North.

David Alexander noted that the work was worthwhile for the community and region. Peter Faccenda responded that further collaboration could help to mitigate against issues related to funding constraints, less resource, and higher expectations on delivery.

Roger Saxon asked if the delineation of the programme area would remain the same having dropped Caithness and North Sutherland from the title and whether this would mean the partnership had interest in activity such as green hydrogen production and green freeports in Easter Ross.

Peter Faccenda responded that with guidance from the Focus North Board the area remains the same, with a loosely defined border allowing some projects on the periphery of the area to receive support. He welcomed the green freeport decision for the Highlands but highlighted his focus on spreading work into the Focus North area and attraction of people into the area.

## **9. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING**

David Alexander noted that there was nothing to report at this time.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Prior to opening up to members, David Alexander noted the following:

- The Trades Council had been in contact with Roz Foyer STUC General Secretary. They received an email from Dave Moxham, Deputy General Secretary, and are working with Just Transition Commission on an invite to come to Caithness. He will provide updates once it has been confirmed.
- David Calder noted that the graduate programme at Dounreay have identified the possibility of a placement for an external socio economic graduate for Focus North, internal applications close at the end of February.
- Jeremy Gilmour noted that the previous subgroup had discussed DSG members attendance at the spring party political conferences and a request had come for basic information on the nuclear industry in Scotland and had provided basic draft information via email before the meeting. He noted that the NDA estate does not hold information on the EDF stations at Hunterston B and Torness despite future transition. He also noted that as the NDA cannot be seen to be affiliated with party politics the presentation could not be branded as being an NDA presentation. David Alexander noted that he and Cllr Struan Mackie and met with representatives from Hunterston and Torness and they had agreed on this approach. They will liaise through David Wallace, NDA.

There being no further business, David Alexander thanked everyone for attending and formally closed the meeting.

David Alexander  
DSG Socio Economic Sub Group Chair  
10<sup>th</sup> February 2023

**ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**

DSG/SESG(2023)M04/A001: DSG/SESG will write to Mark Rouse and ask for a meeting with the supply chain and present their presentation.