

**DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP
SOCIO ECONOMIC SUB GROUP**

Minutes of the DSG Socio Economic Sub Group held on Wednesday 19 July 2023 at 1330 hrs in the Pentland Hotel, Thurso / via MS Teams.

Present: David Alexander Thurso and Wick Trades Council (chair)
Peter Faccenda Focus North Programme Manager (deputy sub group chair)
Trudy Morris Caithness Chamber of Commerce
Sandy Mackie Scrabster Harbour Trust
Gillian Coghill Buldoo Residents Group
Roger Saxon DSG Site Restoration sub group deputy chair

In addition: Tina Wrighton Stakeholder & External Relations Manager, Dounreay
Magnus Davidson Socio Economics Manager, Dounreay
Jeremy Gilmour Head of Community & Economic Development, NDA
Dawn Clasper DSG Minute Secretary, Dounreay
Innes Morgan Communications Summer Student, Dounreay

MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

David Alexander welcomed attendees to the meeting. He welcomed Innes Morgan the communications summer student to the meeting. Introductions were made around the table.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

- Eann Sinclair HIE
- David Calder Head of Sustainability & Socio Economics, Dounreay
- Giles Huby UHI North Highland
- Ron Gunn CHAT
- Murray Lamont North Highland Tourism
- Cllr Struan Mackie DSG Chair

David Alexander noted the Business Meeting discussed attendance at the public meeting and sub groups. Each organisation will be written to reminding that deputies can be delegated to attend the meetings, if members are due to be absent.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

David Alexander noted that the minutes of the last meeting – DSG/SESG(2023)M001, April 2023 – had been endorsed at the public meeting held in June 2023. He invited members to raise any issues. No issues were raised.

Trudy Morris asked about the action regarding hospital costs. Dawn Clasper noted she would share the response with Trudy Morris.

4. 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 sub group the following actions were discussed.

- DSG/PM(2023)M02/A03: Ask observers to report to one of the sub groups the outcome of an internal skills audit and also contact external agencies.

Trudy Morris noted that this action was raised at the public meeting in response to a question regarding the skills audit undertaken by the site and highlighted in the NDA Local Economic and Social Impact Strategy, with suggestion for a wider skills audit of the area.

David Alexander noted that this action would be closed, and a new action would be raised on an update from the NDA strategy.

ACTION: DSG/SESG(2023)M002/A001: NDA to provide update on the outcomes of the strategy including the Dounreay skills audit.

- DSG/BM(2023)M007/A001: Peter Faccenda to explore with Jacobs how to progress the apprenticeship issue. **Action ongoing** Jacobs undertaking work to fact-find, review and identify skills needs. Initial fact-finding complete, first pass at action plan reviewed by steering group, being revised prior to re-issue. Apprenticeship needs and shared apprenticeship model being developed separately – led by Caithness Chamber of Commerce.
- DSG/SESG(2023)M01/A001: Magnus Davidson and Dawn Clasper to look at the Community Fund application form. **Action ongoing:** Magnus Davidson updated that this was discussed at the NDA meeting on 20 June, he noted that this was an ongoing action that will have an outcome as part of the NDA strategy refresh.

Roger Saxon asked if this was Dounreay or throughout the estate and if the criteria will be changed. Jeremy Gilmour confirmed that this will be throughout the whole of the estate and the forms will be looked at for small value applications. He noted that the criteria would stay the same.

- DSG(2023)M01/A03: Setup a Gate B paper review meeting with Gillian and the site restoration sub group team and invite all members. Stewart Ballantine asked to be present in person. David Craig asked for one of the authors to be present if possible (or Adreain Gill/Colin Munro). It was agreed to wait a while until the route map can be better explained. **Action ongoing:** Gillian Coghill provided an update and noted a meeting will take place when the impact the Gate B paper will have on near neighbour and the community is understood.

David Alexander noted that the actions have been closed in a timely manner. Gillian Coghill noted that the Business Meeting meets fortnightly, so the actions are looked at regularly and chased for updates and this has improved the management of the actions.

5. DOUNREAY COMMUNITY FUND REQUESTS

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

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

6. DOUNREAY SOCIO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

David Alexander stated that a written update had been provided - DSG(2023)P024. Magnus Davidson, Socio Economics Manager, was invited to provide key highlights from the paper.

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

- The NDA Socio Economics team visited Dounreay to meet with staff and stakeholders. This was in part to consult on the refresh of the NDA Local Social and Economic Impact Strategy.
- A new Dounreay Socio Economic Strategy is set to be completed later this year. The DSG Socio Economic sub group will be consulted in the process.
- The Socio Economic Annual Review for FY 2021/22 is being completed. This has taken longer than expected due to revisions in format and new data sources being included.
- The Dounreay socio economic budget is increasingly pressurised this FY. This is in part driven by some larger projects applying to Dounreay rather than the NDA, due to the NDA funding commitment to Space Hub Sutherland. Dounreay are looking at innovative funding models to help facilitate project funding.
- Dounreay is providing further support to the PSO route by funding a study on impact of price as a driver for demand into the Wick – Aberdeen route. The study is supported by a widely advertised £50 fare for all one-way tickets in August.
- The Sustainability and Socio Economics team attended the supply chain event held at UHI North Highland in June and presented on sustainability and social value.
- The Sustainability and Socio Economics team attended the NDA innovation and Technology Roadshow in Glasgow and presented on Dounreay innovation in sustainability and socio economics. Members of the DSG were also present.

David Alexander noted that he and Cllr Struan Mackie attended the event and noted this was a very good event and Dounreay and the community came across very well.

- 11 Caithness suppliers have been awarded contracts in Q1 23/24. There were 45 respective contracts to a value of £1.43M, two of these were awarded through reserved procurement for Caithness companies.
- There has been an increased work on social value in procurement through Public Procurement Note 06/20. Work is being undertaken to target social value interventions to the local area and needs using a number of methods.
- Recruitment of early years careers is concluded for 2023.
- STEM events and activities are ongoing.
- The Buldoo residents visited the Low Level Waste Vaults.

Gillian Coghill noted that the visit to the LLW Vaults led to a successful meeting and hopes this continues.

- Focus North Support Hub is underspent due to a Business Manager not having been in place in year 1 of the project. Nicola Sinclair is now in post as the Business Manager with a plan in place to draw down underspend on new projects.
- STEM funding is underspent with delays in returning to pre-covid levels of activity.
- The Forss Road Signs Study status is amber due to a delay in works being completed.

Roger Saxon asked if the Forss signage was a one off expenditure. Magnus Davidson responded that this was a one off expenditure for a study into speed reduction in the area, which includes the installation of new signs.

Jeremy Gilmour thanked the DSG for meeting with the NDA socio Economic team in June to help with the strategy refresh. They have taken away the input from the group and there will be a public consultation for a formal opportunity to input into this.

David Alexander thanked Magnus Davidson and Jeremy Gilmour for the update and invited questions.

Sandy Mackie asked who was undertaking the PSO Study and when will this be completed. Magnus Davidson responded that this was being undertaken by the Highland Council, led by the PSO officer who is jointly funded by Dounreay and the Highland Council. The final report should be available in mid-October.

Sandy Mackie if there was an update on the Caithness Chamber of Commerce Options Appraisal and the Thurso Community Café. Magnus Davidson responded that the Caithness Chamber of Commerce Options Appraisal is currently commercial in confidence, and he would be able to provide an update once this has been completed. The Thurso Community Café is a Community Interest Company that are looking to reuse and recycle sustainable clothing with volunteering experience used to upskill members of the community.

David Alexander noted that a lot of work was being undertaken in STEM and asked if the sub group could invite a STEM representative from Dounreay to a business meeting to learn more about the activity.

ACTION: DSG/SESG(2023)M002/A002: DSG to invite Marie Mackay to a Business meeting to provide a background on STEM activities.

7. FOCUS NORTH UPDATE

David Alexander noted that a written Focus North update had been provided – DSG(2023)P019. He invited Peter Faccenda to provide key highlights from the paper.

Peter Faccenda noted that the action programme is what activity is currently being working on:

- Skills and Talent attraction work is underway. Jacobs is undertaking the work and an action plan will be agreed. The possibility of a shared apprenticeship model is being developed.
- There is a strand of work looking at transport in the region. A working group was formed, and a consultant has now been commissioned to undertake a study, due for completion in 3 to 4 months. It has involved an innovate funding model, encompassing all of Sutherland, with the Caithness place based demonstrator, Sutherland Transport Committee, and Dounreay providing the funding.

- Focus North has identified a group of Key Stakeholders to identify in the Digital Economy, with a workshop organised to develop the area, this will be led by Nicola Sinclair the new Business Development Manager.
- Focus North have written to the new Just Transition Minister highlighting the just transition proposal, this is being followed up with their team in the Scottish Government to raise the Focus North and area profile.
- Focus North partnership were acknowledged as best socio economic project in the NDA Group Awards.
- Focus North attended the Dounreay supply chain event on 8 June and presented to 5 groups of interested supply chain companies.
- Focus North attended the NDA Innovation Technology Roadshow at Strathclyde University on 28 June.
- Focus North continue to submit responses to consultations to raise awareness of the region and Focus North activity.
- Communications continue to be developed with the addition of a space cluster page on the website which covers the North Highlands and Moray Space Cluster strategy.

David Alexander thanked Peter Faccenda for his update and asked Peter Faccenda to invite Nicola Sinclair to the next Socio Economic sub group.

Roger Saxon asked Peter Faccenda to pass on our congratulations to Nicola Sinclair on her position.

8. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

David Alexander noted DSG(2023)C027: Neil Cook Response to DSG Action DSG/PM(2023)M02/A001.

Gillian Coghill noted that this was more pertinent to the Site Restoration sub group, she would ask how the current regulatory enforcements would impact the Dounreay budget.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

- That he and Cllr Struan Mackie met with the NDA Socio Economic team when they visited on the 19 June regarding the NDA Social impact and Communities Strategy. They also met with the Socio Economic sub group members and Focus North on the 21 June.

Gillian Coghill noted this was a very useful meeting and felt that it was very open and honest discussion. Jeremy Gilmour noted this was a good meeting and Jamie Reed was impressed with the input from the DSG and other stakeholders.

- Cllr Struan Mackie and David Alexander attended the SSG Chair and Vice chair meeting in London on 21 June.
- Cllr Struan Mackie and David Alexander attended the NDA Innovation summit in Glasgow on the 28 June.

- Sandy Mackie asked how many Dounreay staff are working from home, what percentage of time they are working from home, and what work has been undertaken to evaluate the impact on Dounreay's mission, with plant activity being highlighted as an example.

ACTION: DSG/SESG(2023)M002/A003: DSG to ask Dounreay how they evaluate the effectiveness of staff working from home.

- Trudy Morris noted there was an article on the front page of the local paper regarding low paid workers. She asked if there was going to be a response from site.

Tina Wrighton noted that there was a response from Dounreay in the newspaper article which highlighted active discussion with the unions over the latest pay settlement.

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

David Alexander
DSG Socio Economic Sub Group Chair
27 July 2023

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

DSG/SESG(2023)M002/A001: NDA to provide update on the outcomes of the strategy including the Dounreay skills audit.

DSG/SESG(2023)M002/A002: DSG to invite Marie Mackay to a Business meeting to provide a background on STEM activities.

DSG/SESG(2023)M002/A003: DSG to ask Dounreay how they evaluate the effectiveness of staff working from home.