

DOUNREAY STAKEHOLDER GROUP BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes of DSG Business Meeting held on Tuesday 15 August 2023 at 0930 on MS Teams Thurso.

Present:	Cllr Struan Mackie	DSG Chair
	Davie Alexander	DSG Vice-chair & Socio Economic sub group chair
	Peter Faccenda	DSG Socio Economic sub group deputy chair
	Dawn Clasper	DSG Minute Secretary
	Tina Wrighton	Stakeholder & External Relations Manager, Dounreay
	Marie Mackay	Employee Engagement Specialist, Dounreay

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Cllr Struan Mackie welcomed everyone to the meeting. He welcomed Marie Mackay, Employee Engagement Specialist, Dounreay and Tina Wrighton Stakeholder & External Relations Manager, Dounreay to the meeting.

Apologies received from Gillian Coghill and Roger Saxon.

2. STEM BRIEF

Marie Mackay noted she would provide an update on STEM at Dounreay; what STEM ambassadors do, the benefits of the programme, STEM at Dounreay, the collaborative working and outline some of the activities Dounreay are involved in.

STEM ambassadors volunteer their time, enthusiasm and provide experiences to encourage young people to achieve more and progress further in STEM. They are role models who provide young people with an insight into STEM subjects and STEM careers, provide an increased understanding of how their learning links to careers and encourage young people to continue to studying STEM subjects and consider a career in STEM. The benefits for the STEM ambassadors are they develop their communication, presentation and problem solving skill and they have the opportunity to showcase their profession, the industry and employer. There are benefits for teachers and schools as the STEM ambassadors can provide experience in topics that teachers may not have a strength in and provide work place examples that link to the curriculum. Teachers and schools make better links with STEM industry.

These young people are the industry's future so it's important to work with them, and the schools, to encourage them, and provide the guidance so they can make informed decisions about their future.

Dounreay's aim is to raise the profile of STEM with young people, families and the community by working with partners to provide a range of activities and programmes. By working in collaboration we are able to have a co-ordinated approach to curriculum planning for STEM across the schools and UHI throughout the school calendar.

They also look to address gender balance in STEM, to break down gender stereotypes from early years onwards. All ambassadors are role models but especially their female ambassadors. Dounreay wants to increase the number of females studying STEM and taking up careers in STEM.

Dounreay has 59 active STEM ambassadors. A further 8 apprentices will join the programme in September and some of the new graduates are expected to join also. Looking at the gender breakdown of their ambassadors 23 female and 36 male ambassadors. There is a range of job levels from apprentices to directors with a broad range of ages, tenure and disciplines.

Dounreay works in collaboration with other organisations and industry in Caithness and North Sutherland such as DYW North Highland, UHI, SDS, other employers (particularly Rolls Royce apprentices), Science Skills Academy and SSERC who manage the STEM ambassador programme in Scotland.

Pre pandemic a STEM Hub North Highland was established comprising of representatives from UHI, DWY North Highland, SSERC, Science Skills Academy and Dounreay. The aim of the hub was to formalise what is done informally. Marie Mackay has been working with the new UHI STEM Development Manager Dawn Bloodworth to move this forward with a workshop planned for early October. The new UHI STEM Co-ordinator for North Highlands, Mara Gibb is now in post and will be involved in the STEM Hub North Highland also.

Dounreay's aim is to deliver STEM to children from nursery to senior phase. They also deliver activities to scouts, brownies and girl guides. Ideally, they want to get that interest at an early age and maintain it through to the young people leaving school and progressing onto higher education or work.

Dounreay manages a key STEM ambassador programme, where each school in Caithness and North Sutherland has a dedicated ambassador who are the link between the school and the STEM network

Marie Mackay outlined some of the activities/events Dounreay's STEM ambassadors run or support:

- Engineering Industry Day aimed at senior phase pupils applying for engineering apprenticeships.
- Step into STEM - an interactive mandatory event for S2 pupils.
- First Lego league Challenge- a lego competition where teams will present their project to a panel of judges and compete in robot games
- Goblin car – electric car kit built during the academic year and then raced at Alford in June
- Caithness Science Festival and Family Day
- Mock interviews - S4 at Thurso Wick and Farr High Schools
- Flight simulator – supporting the SSA's module which will be rolled out to groups of S3 pupils from Thurso, Farr, Wick and Golspie High Schools
- Crest awards - there are 2 levels of awards depends on age groups complete 8 activities to receive their award are all delivered by ambassadors
- Parent evenings – promotion of early career opportunities at Dounreay at S2 upwards parent evenings

- Dounreay has a STEM resource library based in the Dounreay.com office which is available to all ambassadors, community groups, and teachers

There is a small budget for this and there is no cost for the schools for activities, events or travel

Peter Faccenda was glad to see the new UHI STEM ambassador will be integrated with existing activities. He asked how Marie Mackay feels the access to the children is during term time as the DWY have noted it is been more difficult to get curriculum time to do these activities since COVID. Marie Mackay advised she is not experiencing this, she noted pre pandemic they were in all the schools doing activities. The last academic year the schools were catching up and the latter half of the academic year saw a big increase in the number of activities The schools have just returned and already it has been busy planning for the year ahead.

Cllr Struan Mackie noted this was good to hear.

Davie Alexander thanked Marie for taking time to give the business meeting an overview of STEM. He noted that he felt more knowledgeable of STEM and it was very well run.

Marie noted the key thing is to work in partnership to deliver these events.

Tina Wrighton noted that it would be good to raise awareness of STEM at the public meeting. Marie Mackay agreed and she would liaise with her STEM colleagues regarding this.

Peter Faccenda asked if they do anything for parents raising awareness of career opportunities. Marie Mackay advised they attended parent evenings with this aim but this is something that they could explore further going forward.

Cllr Struan Mackie noted that the scope of STEM is impressive, and we are lucky to have a well-defined STEM programme that covers the Dounreay travel to work area. We are conscious that we don't want to feed a funnel for Dounreay but there are emerging skills gaps that she site are open in saying that this is a problem coming down the line. Are there areas of the STEM curriculum that their opportunities come forward that we can say with confidence that young people stay here is they have the right skillset. Is there a way of future proofing gateway point in the STEM curriculum. Marie Mackay noted that they do cover this to some extent as the STEM Ambassadors talk about their careers and what is available at Dounreay.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Cllr Struan Mackie noted that the minutes of the last meeting – DSG/BM(2023)M011, 1 August 2023 – these were endorsed by members. Members agreed this was a true reflection of the meeting. These would now be circulated to all DSG members for their information.

4. ACTION STATUS

Cllr Struan Mackie provided an update on the progress of actions. Discussion focused on:

- DSG/BM(2023)M011/A01: Cllr Struan Mackie to speak to Scottish Nuclear Sites Stakeholder Group regarding membership and requesting whether we should have an additional member of substitute.

Cllr Struan Mackie noted that he was in dialogue with Diane Hamilton, Scottish Government and noted that this was a legacy issue. DSG will have two spaces going forward in case of absences or illness.

- DSG/SRSG(2023)M02/A001: Neil Cook to provide more information DSG(2023)C027 on how additional pressures will impact the community and how this will impact on spend. **Action ongoing**
- DSG/SESG(2023)M002/A003: DSG to ask Dounreay how they evaluate the effectiveness of staff working from home. **Action ongoing:** Response received and issued on 9 August.

Davie Alexander noted this was a poor response and would like to clarify processes tools and systems and detail on surveys. Tina Wrighton noted there is mandatory manager tool kit training which includes flexible working that all managers have to attend.

5. DSG PUBLIC MEETING

Cllr Struan Mackie noted that the public meeting would be held on 20 September. Dawn Clasper noted that the presentation would need to be decided. This was discussed and decided and agreed by the Business Meeting group.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following was raised:

- Cllr Struan Mackie noted that the presence at the Mey games was well attended and the NDA tent was excellent.
- Cllr Mackie noted the Business Meeting met with David Peattie on 4 August, topics of discussion included engagement with academia, recruitment and the ongoing issue on skills, procurement, and branding.

7. CLOSE

There being no further business, Cllr Struan Mackie thanked everyone their input and formally closed the meeting.

Cllr Struan Mackie
DSG Chair
21 August 2023

