



## Inverness & Nairn ENTERPRISE

ref: board minutes 2005-04-21

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE INE BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 21 APRIL 2005 IN THE GREEN HOUSE.**

**Present:** Ken Mackie Chairman  
Alasdair Munro  
Chris Silver  
Cllr Bob Wynd  
Iain Scott  
Freda Rapson  
Rosemary Machen-Young  
Fiona Larg

**In attendance:** Stuart Black  
Ian Fraser  
Billy Macrae  
Stuart Fulton (Whiteness Property Co. – 1 item only)  
Frank Strang (Whiteness Property Co. – 1 item only)  
Judy Clinton

#### **1. PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD BY STUART FULTON AND FRANK STRANG ON BEHALF OF WHITENESS PROPERTY CO.**

The Whiteness Property Company outlined the importance of the recently purchased Ardersier site and offered the board a full history of the company's activities to date.

Six major shareholders purchased the site on 9 December 2004.

The site is 817 acres and, following a great deal of discussion on possible uses, is emerging as an opportunity to provide a major destination resort and marina. The shareholders are determined that throughout all the planning stages every effort will be made to ensure the final outcome reflects a top quality resort measuring up to the uniqueness of what is generally seen as a very special site.

The Whiteness Property Company wishes to ensure good working relationships with other groups in Inverness to avoid possible competition and conflict. They are already in discussion with Castle Stuart and Inverness Harbour Authority to open all lines of communication, and plan to contact other interest parties as appropriate.

Sir Terry Farrell, a well respected architectural expert, is to be appointed to create a master plan, taking into consideration the following:

- Top class hotel
- Niche market shops
- Substantial marina
- Facilities which may embrace
  - Health/fitness
  - Sports
  - Leisure
- Housing
  - 25% top of the range
  - 50% mainstream
  - 25% affordable
- support infrastructure
  - nursery accommodation
  - primary education
  - necessary retail

McDermotts cleaned up the site well and there is now a full decontamination plan in place. A costly environmental insurance policy has been purchased and every effort is being made to create an environmental exemplar, employing the services of ecologist/environmentalist Roy Dennis.

Board members raised questions or comment on the following points:

- Golf courses – there is room for more development and possibly an indoor facility
- Business use – many and varied possibilities have been considered and the new owners remain open to further discussion.
- Services – the current services, including sewage, will need to be upgraded
- Area of scientific interest – for example, local wildlife may be integrated into the overall programme where possible.
- Roads – the proposed A96 upgrade will be timely and offer an improved access to the site.
- Housing – housing of all levels should be fully integrated.

The board were invited to visit the site; either individually or as a group and it was agreed that the ideal timing for this would be towards the end of the summer when the planning process reached the next stage.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Fulton and Mr. Strang for their presentation.

## **2. APOLOGIES**

Director's apologies were received from: Robbie Bremner

Staff apologies were received from: Ruaraidh MacNeil and Audrey MacIver

### **3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were none.

### **4. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 10 MARCH 2005**

The board approved the minutes.

### **5. MATTERS ARISING**

Bob Wynd recommended that the board invites David McGrath of siGEN to give a presentation on Hydrogen Fuel Cells, which will in the future make a contribution to the renewable sector and the reduction of Hydro-carbon emissions.

This was agreed.

### **6. REPORTS**

- **Chairman's update**

The Chairman had nothing to report this month but reminded those present of the invitation from Ryden Property Consultants to attend the seminar taking place at the Marriott on Thursday 28 - Future Power House of the Highlands - for interested parties.

- **Chief Executive's update**

INE achieved most of its performance targets for 2004/5. The chairman congratulated the staff.

Major issues emerging from the recent HIE network strategy survey were; housing, transport and job quality.

The draft strategy plan will be drawn up for presentation to the HIE Board in May and the final plan launched by Jim Wallace at the network conference.

The Scottish Executive starts a performance and financial management review in the autumn.

### **7. DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT**

There have been 7 applications received; a shortlist of 3-4 will be interviewed. A panel is being set up and interviews will take place shortly.

### **8. DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

A paper was circulated to the directors and the contents noted.

## **9. WRITTEN REPORTS**

- Approvals – the board noted the up to date situation, and requested that staff provide updates on any policy changes.
- Financial – the board noted the year-end position. Staff will provide a breakdown of the 2005/6 budget at the next meeting.
- LEC Highlights –
  - Corrections noted – Eastern Airways should read Easy Jet, with 575,000 being the passenger figure.
  - Centre for Health Science – legal issues currently being addressed
  - Airport - economic impact study available on request.
  - Youth Voice – Two 15 year olds have been interviewed and have been offered positions as observers on the board.
- Network Highlights – The Chairman invited volunteers to attend the Network Conference which will be held in Aviemore, 16-18 June.
- Risk Register – the board offered feedback on the risk register and the executive office will forward this information to HIE.
- Freedom of Information – reports covering the whole network were made available to the board.
- Complaints – content was noted.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- It was brought to the board's attention that Mr. McInnes of Nairn has a problem with services at his site on the Balmakeith Trading Estate. The development team concerned with property will look into this matter to see if INE can help.
- A fast track study of the A96 corridor from Inverness to the airport is underway. The consultants will complete the study in August and a meeting with the Minister for Transport will follow. A study of the full corridor from Inverness to Aberdeen starts later this year.
- Proposals for a rail hub at Dalcross look promising, with an increase of services between Inverness and Elgin also being considered.
- INLEF is planning to organise an Inverness State of the Economy conference in the Autumn.
- The Moray Employers Coalition launch was very successful. Rosemary Machen-Young reported that it is her intention to resign her position as chairperson of the Highland Coalition.
- Updated LEC Directors guides were handed out to all board members.
- The next board meeting will take place on Thursday 2 June 2005 at 1.00 pm at the Green House.