

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WESTERN ISLES ENTERPRISE BOARD HELD ON MONDAY 23 JANUARY 2006 AT 1700HRS IN THE WESTERN ISLES ENTERPRISE BOARDROOM, STORNOWAY

Present: Murdo MacIennan
Angus Campbell
Calum Maclean
Donald R Macleod
Alex Tearse

In Attendance: Donnie Macaulay
Lorna Macaulay
Neil MacKinnon
Gillian Morrison
Iain Morrison

1.06.1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Angus Campbell's interest in agenda item 1.06.5, 5.6 National Training Programmes was noted.

Alex Tearse's interest in agenda item 1.06.5, 5.4 Operational Report - An Lanntair and agenda item 1.06.6, 6.1 Connected Communities was noted.

Murdo MacIennan's interest in agenda item 1.06.6, 6.1 Connected Communities was noted.

Donald R Macleod's interest in agenda item 1.06.6, 6.2 Camcal Ltd was noted and he left the meeting during discussion of this agenda item.

1.06.2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Neil Campbell, Isabel Graham, Finlay Macdonald, Murdo Macdonald, Rachel Mackenzie and Hector Stewart.

1.06.3 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 7TH NOVEMBER 2005

The minute of the meeting held 7th November 2005 was approved by Calum Maclean and seconded by Alex Tearse.

1.06.4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES

5.05.4 Matters Arising from These Minutes
Donnie Macaulay confirmed the Network response to the National Transport Strategy consultation document had now been submitted and circulated to Members.

5.05.6 Management Information – Operational Report
Donnie Macaulay stated that the Youth Observer issue was to be addressed shortly.

1.06.5 MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

5.1 Quarterly Report

Members noted the report.

5.2 Approvals/Targets

Donnie Macaulay confirmed progress made towards all targets and that staff resource was focused on achieving all targets by year end.

5.3 Budgetary Update

Donnie Macaulay confirmed budget was anticipated to be fully utilised and that WIE are hopeful to be in a position to utilise any further funds which may become available.

5.4 Operational Report

Donnie Macaulay spoke to the report highlighting the on-going discussions with partner organisations to reach agreement on the funding deficit for An Lanntair. A paper is anticipated shortly, which would require Board consideration.

Members were also informed that procedures were being finalised for progressing proposals under Highland 2007.

Members noted the report.

5.5 Risk Return

Gillian Morrison updated Members on amendments to the risk return. Members noted the report.

5.6 National Training Programmes

Lorna Macaulay spoke to the paper, highlighting the success of the programmes and the relative outcomes. Members were informed of the 93% employed status on Skillseekers which is a marked increase on previous years' statistics.

Lorna Macaulay stated the new funding model is in line with local priorities, with light engineering and architecture among the employment areas classed as high priority.

Members noted the report and delegated authority to an Applications Committee of the WIE Board, for approval of programme funding and subsequent contract allocation.

1.06.6

UPDATES

6.1 Connected Communities

Neil Mackinnon spoke to the paper highlighting progress to date including infrastructure development and legal land/mast issues.

Conversion rate from expressions of interest to orders and installation is relatively low at this stage but crossover with BT enabled exchanges are impacting on this currently, as is construction works remaining to be completed.

6.2 Camcal Ltd

Donnie Macaulay circulated Members with an update paper and spoke to the paper.

The company are currently looking for additional space for fitting out fabricated units, including towers. It is proposed (and agreed with HIE) that WIE progress a one year lease, for the paint shop to address this issue. The company is also progressing purchase of a crane and work is on-going in that area.

Construction of the Paint/Blast facility to be acquired by HIE is at an advanced stage and the funding allocation to this has been increased to reflect actual construction costs.

Cash flow management is an area of focus, and the company has secured and is pursuing a number of small contracts. Larger scale contracts which would offer long term stability continue to be pursued.

Members considered and discussed the financial proposals recommended in the update paper. The paper has been considered and approved by the HIE Management Group.

1.06.7

BUSINESS PLAN 2006/07

Iain Morrison introduced the draft Business Plan, highlighting Network strategy A Smart, Successful Highlands & Islands. The draft plan was presented to Members for comment and is scheduled for submission to HIE by 31 January.

Members agreed the transport and population elements of the plan require increased focus, with feasibility work addressing prospects of a fixed link between Harris and the Southern Isles a priority.

Iain Morrison requested any further comments be forwarded to him as soon as possible.

1.06.8 LCC/UHI FOUNDATION MEMBERSHIP

Members agreed to carry forward this agenda item.

1.06.9 BRANDING PROJECT

Donnie Macaulay introduced the paper and welcomed comments from Members. Members agreed the need to progress the project as agreed with partners and to conclude the prolonged consultation period. Members recognised indicative cost levels highlighted in the paper in relation to the initial phase of the project.

1.06.10 WI RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Donnie Macaulay spoke to the paper, highlighting that public and private partner organisations are in agreement that the Western Isles should pursue research and development activity within the area, working towards a centre of excellence. Members highlighted the need for a strategic focus ensuring value for money and outcomes, and close links with the business community and with business development opportunities.

A funding proposal is expected and will be brought forward in due course.

1.06.11 ORGANISATION REVIEW

Murdo MacLennan updated Members of the situation to date, including on-going consultations with staff and Scottish Executive representatives.

Careers Scotland, their role and integration to the Network is being discussed as high priority.

A central office base within the town of Stornoway is being discussed, with the Network Data Centre in Lionacleit being highlighted as a successful model of decentralisation and multi-function integration.

1.06.12 AOB

With no further business, the meeting was closed.

Approved: *[Signature]* (Chair)
Date: *6/3/06*