

ORKNEY LOCAL ECONOMIC FORUM

NOTE OF MEETING HELD

ON

TUESDAY, 8 JUNE 2004

AT

AYRE HOTEL, KIRKWALL, ORKNEY

Present:

Orkney Enterprise	represented by	B Kynoch (chair)
		K Grant
		R Kirkpatrick (observer)
		G Sinclair (observer)
Highlands and Islands Enterprise		A Nicolson
Orkney Islands Council		J Foubister
		J Baster
		L Kerr
Orkney College		B Ross
Careers Scotland – Orkney		J Slater
Chamber of Commerce		D McLean
Orkney Quality Food & Drink Ltd		B Nelson
Jobcentre Plus		K Johnstone
Orkney Fish Farmers Association		M Turner
Orkney Craft Industries Association		E Bentley
Orkney Renewable Energy Forum		C Risbridger

1 Apologies:

Orkney Islands Council	S Croy (observer)
	A Whelan (observer)
Orkney Tourist Board	B Foulkes
	J Hinckley
Brian Burns Associates	B Burns (observer)
Stromness Community Business Forum	G Argo
Orkney Quality Food & Drink Ltd	S Crichton
NFU Scotland	K Slater
Voluntary Action Orkney	N Campbell
Orkney Jewellery Group	A Gray
Orkney Fisheries Association	A Coghill
Orkney Housing Association	D Murdoch
Isles Forum	B Muir

2 Note of previous meeting – 17 February 2004

The note of the meeting held on 17 February 2004 was approved.

3 Matters arising

Members noted that various sectoral strategies continue to be progressed.

OE is conducting a review of tourism accommodation in Orkney.

4 Presentation – Issues affecting the Orkney economy

Alastair Nicolson, Head of Strategic Planning and Research, Highlands & Islands Enterprise gave members a power point presentation on the socio-economic profile of Orkney.

Members then discussed the following issues raised during the presentation:

- Globalisation of manufacturing, with particular reference to the jewellery industry.
- Preserving the identity of Orkney – Orkney the Brand.
- Additional assets/opportunity for Orkney – potential container port in Scapa Flow.
- Tourism – possible conflict with renewable energy developments.
- Population trends – speculation that Orkney’s population is now in fact increasing based on NHS Orkney doctor registration figures.
- Low unemployment and restricted labour market – targeted immigration, graduate placements in both private and public sector and sponsorship of students.
- Average weekly wage of £352 for Orkney – figures from 2001 National Statistics and does not include self employed/seasonal workers. Members felt that the statistics over estimated the average weekly wage, but this is the best information available at present.
- Community Planning – L Kerr requested independent feedback on recent research on social deprivation in Argyle & Bute to determine if such research would be of value for Orkney. Orkney’s deprivation index in the top 5 least deprived areas and this has an impact on future funding allocations.

5 Draft guidance notes for Local Economic Forums issued by the Scottish Executive

Members noted the content of this document.

6 & 7 Discussion on the future role of the forum and Orkney LEF – Audit Scotland Final Visit Report

Members noted the content of the Audit Scotland report on the Orkney LEF.

Members discussed the future role of the Forum and felt that it performed a useful key function as the method of providing economic input into the Community Planning process. In order to do this it was accepted that the Forum requires on going involvement from the private sector as well as public sector representation.

Orkney’s Community Planning process has been held up as an example of good practice.

Although the LEF members awaited the decision from the Scottish Executive on the future of the LEFs with interest, they agreed that the Orkney LEF should continue as long as it meaningfully contributed to the Community Planning process.

8 Any other business

None

9 Date of next meeting

Date of next meeting to be arranged – autumn 2004.

G Sinclair
28 July 2004