

## **Highland Economic Forum**

**14.00 30 January 2018**

**Canal Parks Clubhouse, Inverness**

### **Note of Meeting**

**In attendance:** Allan Henderson (Chair), Stuart Black, Andy McCann, Kenny Macinnes, John Robertson, Neil Macrae (HITRANS), Steve Westbrook, David Richardson (FSB), Fraser Grieve (SCDI), Gary I Campbell (UHI), James Gibbs (HIE), Mark Tate (Cairngorm National Park), Roy Kirk (HIE), David Oxley (HIE), Anthony Standing (SDS), David Watson (Cairngorm National Park Authority), Viccie Masson (Note of meeting)

#### **1. Apologies**

Stewart Nicol (Inverness Chamber of Commerce), Grahame Smith (STUC), Donna Mackinnon (Scottish Government), Calum Macaulay (Albyn Housing), Kate Maclean (NHS Highland), Roddy Bailey (SDS), Debbie Gray (UHI Thurso), Graham Neville (SNH), Ranald Robertson (HITRANS), Trudy Morris (Caithness Chamber of Commerce), Inglis Lyon (HIAL)

#### **2. Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal update (John Robertson)**

Update presentation given (circulated).

SSA – Initial two locations agreed, remaining 3 locations yet to be decided and options appraisals currently being carried out.

Affordable Housing – Predominantly a help-to-buy scheme for young people. Update Report is being taken to Feb EDI committee. Additional infrastructure fund agreed with the Scottish Government (£10m), for use throughout the Highlands to open land up for development.

City WIFI: Inverness City WIFI has been rolled out, additional towns across the Highlands are having WIFI installed in their town centres: Alness, Tain, Invergordon, Dornoch, Fort William, Portree, Ullapool, Aviemore, Wick, Thurso, Fort Augustus, Dingwall, Nairn and Drumnadrochit.

Communications: Group has been established, others are encouraged to get involved.

East Link: Further work is being carried out, HC's contribution the Inshes junction redesign, which will result in 3 lanes over the Inshes overbridge. East Link completion expected to be c6 years away. A second bridge is expected to be built alongside the current one, meaning the Inshes roundabout will become a 4 way junction rather than the current 6 way.

Concerns voiced regarding the level of congestion already in that area, the lack of transport linkages, and the impact that further development of the campus may have. Noted that the current level of traffic is nearing the point where Transport Scotland may

object to applications. Request made for 3<sup>rd</sup> lane to be established on the southbound A9 early in the development.

Agreed that a survey of employees throughout the campus should be carried out to identify peak times, This will be used to provide the information required to back up a request for additional public transport. Staff should be asked who would use the transport should it be made available, and where they would be travelling from.

**Action:** DO to carry out survey of staff and report back at next meeting. **DO**

Request for the West Link project to be included in presentations to show that HC projects are included as part of the CRD.

**Action:** JR to update presentation. **JR**

### **3. Enterprise & Skills Review**

(presentation given & circulated with note)

Further information regarding governance, and the new format for enterprising skills related meetings circulated and discussed. Agreed that an MoU would be brought to the next meeting.

**Action:** AMc to bring MoU to next HEF. **AMc**

Agreed that organisations attending the HEF should represent the sector as a whole, and be willing to consult within their local sectors as required.

Proposed structure noted and agreed.

### **4. Workshop**

Economic Challenge presentation given by SW (attached) providing an update on key sectors including tourism, care, energy, life sciences, and the creative industries. Following this a SWOT analysis was carried out on Infrastructure, Business and Skills sectors. The objectives, a prioritised action plan and an implementation plan will be brought back to the next meeting.

### **5. AOB**

UHI recognition: In previous years UHI has been omitted from The Times' University listing as it doesn't fit into any of their categories, however due to their positive work and development of the region this year they have been included.

Date of Next Meeting – May 2018