



OCPP Steering Group

Minutes of the 44th meeting of the OCPP Steering Group
held at 9:00 on 23rd January 2009 in the St. Magnus Centre, Kirkwall

Present:	Stephen Hagan James Stockan John Ross Scott Alistair Buchan Iain Crozier Ken Grant David Miller Gaynor Jones Elaine Grieve Anna Whelan Hannah Laird	Convener, OIC (<i>Chair</i>) Vice-Convener, OIC Chair, NHS Orkney Chief Executive, OIC Chief Executive, NHS Orkney Area Manager, HIE Chief Inspector, Northern Constabulary Chief Executive, VAO Chair, Partnership Liaison Group Head of Policy, OIC (<i>Secretary</i>) Community Planning Officer, OCPP (<i>minutes</i>)
By invitation:	Alastair Nicolson Karen Johnstone	Head of Planning and Economics, HIE (<i>for item3</i>) Manager, Job Centre Plus (<i>for item3</i>)

1. Minutes of 43rd meeting held 16 December 2008

- 1.1 It was noted that Gaynor Jones' job title should be amended to Chief Executive. Subject to this amendment the minutes were accepted.

2. Matters arising

- 2.1 There were no matters arising.

3. Impact on Orkney of the current economic climate

- 3.1 Alastair Nicolson from HIE presented a review of the impact on Orkney of the current economic climate. Some key points from this presentation are summarised below:

- i. House prices going down and fewer house sales.
- ii. Price per barrel oil down
- iii. The Highlands and Islands economy is reliant upon small businesses
- iv. Unemployment in Orkney is rising but is low (1.2%)
- v. Investment in oil and alternative energy remains strong
- vi. The food and drink industry also remain strong however increasing fuel costs affecting profit
- vii. Nationally the Financial sector has been significantly affected, this is not a large sector in the Highlands and Islands.
- viii. Tourism may be affected by the reduction in disposable income, however there has been a growth in bookings for self catering accommodation.
- ix. Construction: demand for new homes and home improvements remain strong however many large property projects have been halted.

DRAFT

- 3.2 In subsequent discussion the following issues were raised:
- i. Orkney can explore new food and drink markets overseas.
 - ii. The unemployment figure of 1.2% does not include the recent redundancies following the closure of Woolworths. Alastair acknowledged the gap in the market and the increased unemployment, but advised that the closure may be perceived as an opportunity for local businesses and therefore the Orkney economy. HIE can offer business advice to businesses considering adapting their plans in light of this closure. Karen Johnstone advised that of the 38 made redundant from Woolworths, 11 had presented themselves to the Job Centre Plus. Of the remaining staff, some have found employment and others were part time staff.
 - iii. Ken Grant advised that a team comprised of local agencies is available to provide support to businesses going through crisis periods and contemplating layoffs; this team is on permanent standby and can act as and when required.
 - iv. The Job Centre Plus reported that vacancy numbers and the number of unemployed people finding work remained healthy.
 - v. The Farming industry has been doing well out of the recent weakness in sterling as Single Farm Payments are in Euros.
 - vi. Highlands and Islands tourism is predominantly aimed at the second holiday destination, and there was discussion around whether it should be marketed as a first holiday destination to replace foreign holidays.
 - vii. Upcoming construction projects: Dental premises, two new schools and a halls of residence. These large construction projects will bring more money and employment into the economy.
- 3.3 Councillor Stockan questioned the decision to stop financial support to new business start ups. Ken Grant advised that this was a government decision, and reported that the majority of the successful businesses believed that they would have done well regardless of the financial support. Alastair Nicolson advised that emphasis should be placed on sectors rather than individual businesses, in particular, energy and food and drink sectors, and that a gradual, preventative approach should be taken at this stage to minimise the affect of the recession..
- 3.4 Elaine Grieve suggested that awareness of Orkney's relatively strong markets should be conveyed to the public, instilling confidence locally. She also queried whether more should be done to market Orkney as a tourist destination for the Scottish 'homecoming'. Councillor Stockan proposed investing in a tourism loyalty scheme, offering incentives for tourists who return to Orkney.
- 3.5 It was agreed that a stream of positive press releases should be taken forward in liaison with the OIC communications team. **Action AFW**
- 3.6 It was agreed that marketing should be kept on the agenda and Barbara Foulkes should be invited to a Steering Group meeting in the near future. **Action HL**

4. Joint working in Orkney update

- 4.1 Alistair Buchan provided an update on the joint working projects in Orkney:
- i. Schools Investment Programme: good progress being made although capacity issues to be addressed.
 - ii. Care facilities: target for sign off is end January, a report is to be presented to Social Services and Housing Committee on Tuesday regarding the proposals.
 - iii. Balance of care: update report pending

DRAFT

- iv. Community Health and Social Care Partnership: Proposals have been agreed, and the CHSCP will be initiated from April 2010.
- v. Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV): The approach to this is now one of evolution, rather than big bang.
- vi. Procurement – provision to continue with a shared Procurement Officer.
- vii. Property Management and maintenance – consultants are due to be reporting on this soon. A report will go the March meeting of the Steering Group. **Action: HL**
- viii. Finance services – it is intended that finance services should be included in the SPV, at the second stage (ICT services are to go in first)
- ix. Gaynor Jones requested clarity on how the CHSCP fitted into the Community Planning structure. It was noted that this question cannot yet be answered but, once it can, will be reported to the Steering Group.

5. Single Outcome Agreement

- 5.1 There was some discussion of the issues raised at the SOA workshop for CPPs on 13 January 2009. It was noted that the lack of formal guidance had created difficulties in drafting the SOA, but did at least allow a degree of freedom for CPPs to develop local agreements which suited their own requirements. It was noted that the timescale for second-round SOAs had been changed from 2009-12 to 2009-11 (2 years only) to align SOAs with the local government funding cycle. It was further noted that any “asks” submitted in second-round SOAs would need to be backed up by a business case.
- 5.2 Recent Scottish Government guidance listing the current configuration of public bodies was noted.
- 5.3 Recent guidance from the Improvement Service on Generic SOA issues for CPPs was noted..
- 5.4 Draft OCPP SOA for 2009-12: It was noted that the consultation draft of the SOA had been released on 24 December with a consultation period to the end of January. Anna Whelan emphasised the importance of the partnership signing up to this document as a group.
- 5.5 Arrangements for approval of SOA by partner Boards: It was noted that the second draft of the SOA was going to the Council’s Policy and Resources Committee on 17 February, and would be available to other partners for submission to their boards from c. 9 February.
- 5.6 Proposed joint SOA seminar on 27 February 2009: It was agreed to go ahead with a joint seminar on 27 February to “sign off” the final draft SOA. It will be too late by then to make any changes to that draft but further changes could potentially still be made during subsequent discussion with the Scottish Government before the formal sign off at the end of May 2009.

6. Fairer Scotland Fund

- 6.1 A summary of the Fairer Scotland Fund outcomes for 2009-10 was noted.
- 6.2 It was reported that the previous meeting of the Steering group had approved the majority of findings of the sub-group of the Partnership Liaison Group. However, three bids had been approved subject to conditions identified by the sub-group being met. Anna Whelan presented a paper which summarised the conditions, the responses received from the three applicants and a commentary by the sub-group. After a balanced discussion, the Steering Group agreed to approve all three bids, with the proviso that applicants be asked to address any remaining reservations expressed by the sub-group.
- 6.3 Letter from Stephen White, Scottish Government: Anna Whelan presented a letter from Stephen White reporting on developments in national governance of the Fairer Scotland Fund,

DRAFT

including confirmation that any underspend of the Fairer Scotland Funds in 2008-09 may be retained for the following year. The letter also confirmed that research was being undertaken into methodologies for the distribution of resources in rural areas, to replace the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. This followed up a series of meetings in which Orkney had previously been involved.

7. Scottish Health Council Annual Review 23 September 2008

7.1 This review was presented for noting and was accepted.

8. Services for Children and Young People Development Group—terms of reference

8.1 This report was presented for approval, and was agreed by the Steering Group.

9. Any other business

9.1 Gaynor Jones asked for support from the Community Planning Partnership for a proposal by VAO to pilot a new model of third sector funding which would see resources for Councils of Voluntary Service, LSEPs and Volunteer Centres brought together for local distribution. In order to do this, an exchange of letters was required with OCPP to demonstrate that VAO was fully engaged in community planning. The Steering Group agreed to support VAO's proposal. **Action: AFW**

9.2 John Ross Scott asked whether the Tourism sector should be represented on the Steering Group. It was noted that tourism was one of a number of business sectors previously represented on the Local Economic Forum. HIE was currently developing a model to replace the LEF.

10. Date of next meeting

10.1 The date of the next meeting has been set for 13 February 2009 at 2.15 in the St. Magnus Centre, and the subsequent meeting on 27 March 2009.