

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF
NORTH ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL ACTION GROUP**

**MONDAY, 24 MARCH 2014
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN**

Present

Belinda Miller	LAG Chairperson
James Bream	Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce
John Loder	Formartine Partnership
Dawn Tuckwood	NHS Grampian
Chris White	Aberdeenshire Council
Gina Ford	Scottish Enterprise
Philip Smith	Visit Scotland
Zillah Jamieson	Banffshire Coast Tourism Partnership
Duncan Leece	The Banffshire Partnership Ltd
Keith Bennett	Mid Deeside Community Council
Scott Petrie	Scottish Land & Estates
Will Clark	PFFPA
Linda Hope	NESCOL
Irene Rowe	Buchan Community Councils
Robert Stevenson	NESFO
Anne Birnie	NESFO
Andy Willox	Federation of Small Businesses
Ian Cowe	Forestry Commission Scotland

Officers in Attendance

Martin Brebner	Team Manager - European Policy & Programmes
Alasdair Cunningham	European Programmes Co-Ordinator
David John McRobbie	European Programmes Co-Ordinator
June Jaffrey	European Programme Claims Officer

Guest

Nicola Graham	Ekos
Ian Jenkins	Ekos
Alastair Prior	Scottish Government

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Belinda welcomed those present and introductions were made round the table for the benefit of all.

2. UPDATE SINCE LAST MEETING

- 2.1 Martin Brebner advised that an application for support for funding for the preparatory work on a draft LDS had been made and that Ekos are the consultants. A review of LAG membership is currently being undertaken. The finalised membership will be forwarded to all.
- 2.2 Alastair Prior (Scottish Government) advised that the deadline for submission of draft LDS is 31.3.14 (for both Rural and marine programmes). It is to be a multi funded strategy, working with Marine Scotland to build a seamless Local Development Strategy; which will be ready in September 2014. The LDS will articulate priorities, clarify decision making process and provide clarity on roles and responsibilities for LAG members.

3. APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CHAIR

- 3.1 Belinda will remain as Interim Chair; nominations are welcomed for a substantive Chair when the programme is operational. It is proposed that Aberdeenshire Council will remain as lead partner, but this will need to be agreed formally by the LAG. Guidance on the responsibilities as LAG members will be forwarded to all.

4. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON 1ST DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (EKOS)

- 4.1 A presentation was given by Ekos who are currently drafting the LDS; with key points from today's meeting feeding back into the LDS. Engagement with NALAG members will go on beyond the first draft submission date of 31.3.14. The draft objectives outlined at today's meeting will be looked at in greater depth in the LDS. It was clarified that "urban" areas could be included in the new LDS (no longer a population cap of 10k population). Threats of a similar nature were highlighted in the North and South areas ie migration, skills shortage, transport links. Statistics showing Aberdeenshire in relation to National figures will be shown in the LDS along with the differences across the six administrative areas. Other areas of concern were;
 - Negative perception of the fishing industry
 - Retaining young people in the area (particularly Peterhead)
 - Employment (under employment, creation of promotion prospects)
 - Housing (lack of affordability, creation of commuter towns)
 - Aberdeenshire Council services working alongside LDS priorities (Ekos will look at coherence)
 - Equal opportunities

5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Ekos advise they will refine the priorities. The presentation by Ekos and the draft LDS will be forwarded to NALAG members.