

## **North Skye Broadband Steering Group Meeting No 5**

**8<sup>th</sup> October 2015 Argos Centre Portree – 18.00**

### **Minutes**

#### **Attendees**

Roy Bennett, (Chair) Charles Mc Crimmon (Deputy Chair) James Caldwell, Nick Duffill, Nial Till,

Apologies were received from Robin Crorie, Martin Farquhar, Elgar Finlay, Alaister Nicolson, Nigel Redfern, Moira Scobie, Geoff Semler, John Coghill, Brian Mennie

**Roy Bennett** opened the meeting, introduced himself as **Chair**, thanked the members for having the confidence in him to vote him Chair and vowed to do his best in the role. The meeting followed the published Agenda up to a point.

**Previous Minutes** for 8.10.2 15 were accepted with one minor correction to the spelling re the name James Caldwell.

**Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest

**Progress Report** The Chair briefly shared the conversation he had held with Geoff Semler re progress on HIE Funding, PM job advertisement and other matters, the HIE funding bid was still progressing with it being stressed that Alistair Nicholson had indicated very positive support for the project but had expressed no indication of when a decision would be reached. The Chair noted the Postcode Map and brief had been completed and other business was still outstanding from the last meeting.

#### **Action Points from Minutes of previous Meeting(s)**

##### **Completed**

ND and EF had produced a postcode map and EF had written a brief to go with it. – completed.

RC setting up webmail/email accounts for members – completed

NT amend briefing note to cater for EF comment and reissue – completed

MF Draft PR strategy document - completed

##### **Ongoing**

RC had informed the meeting prior that he was still awaiting progression of the bank account by the bank and would circulate paperwork for membership and directors one it was completed.

RC was in the process of preparing the draft Gaelic Statement of Intent and expected to have it out for circulation shortly.

Discuss and agree hit list with for the briefing note with MF

All role of secretary – no takers yet CM offered to take minutes if no one else can be found for the role of Secretary

HIE/CBS – Latest update – not available

Discussion then followed on the following items due to absence of key members for certain agenda items.

**PR Strategy** MF was not present so the group were unable to discuss progressing the PR strategy in detail. This led into a general discussion of the PR strategy and how we could progress, it was agreed the PR Strategy was now a priority and implementing the strategy and actions in it are now critical. It was also noted that without clarity around funding any work on the Strategy could be fruitless.

It was also noted by NT that the SG having someone shadowing MF would be useful, and the issue of some steering group members forming a small sub group of say 3 would allow a better feedback on the PR Strategy into meeting in the absence of MF. NT offered to shadow MF and it was agreed by the group that this would be held in further consideration pending clarity around the PR situation.

**Action point All to formulate thoughts on a PR sub group and propose a framework for moving forward by next meeting 22.10.2015**

**Funding.** The group were informed by the Chair that the directors namely SG were underpinning the costs to date out of their own pockets. Whilst the group were grateful for this, concern was expressed that there was no definitive date around when the group could expect to receive a funding decision and this was beginning to impact on planning the work at hand. A request was made that letter of intent or suitable E-mail be provided by HIE to ensure the Directors would have their expenses reimbursed and that some clarity be provided about when we could expect a decision. The group felt that if this were to drag on for another 6 – 8 weeks with no indication of a decision then any further work on the project will be thrown into jeopardy.

**Action Point – Chair to express concerns of SG to Directors re HIE Funding Decision**

**PM Job Advertisement.** The request by GS to the Chair prior to the meeting that this item be discussed as an Agenda Item was honoured. Following discussion and subject to caveats concerning clarity around funding it was agreed that the wording for the advert for PM would be undertaken. ND offered to action this using the Giga Plus model as a basis for the advert.

**Action ND to word advert for PM – by 13.10.2015**

**SG membership** It was recognised that as the work deepens, clarity around who was on the SG and who was likely to attend on a regular basis was discussed and it was unclear to the group who was on the SG and who wasn't, what skill sets were available and what were not. Concern was also expressed that whilst we wished to be as open as possible that a big group could become unwieldy. It was agreed that a current definitive list of members needed to be produced and their respective geographic areas and potentially roles within the group be finalised and circulated.

It was also mentioned that an ideal group size of 9 plus 3 in the active PR group was given some thought, this would allow decisions to be made efficiently whilst remaining open to observers or those members who wished to participate for the sole reason of remaining informed and reporting back to their communities, this was recognised as a critical function too in community engagement.

**Action Point Chair to ascertain from Directors full membership of SG before next meeting.**

**Action Point SG Members to think on structure and size, resolving the issue by the next meeting 22.10.2015**

### **Steering Group Procedures**

Discussion followed of how the Steering Group would work internally and when it would be quorate or not.

**Quora** It was proposed by the Deputy Chair that the group be Quorate at 4 not including the Chair. With Chair holding the casting vote this was determined to be the minimum number to enable the work to be completed efficiently.

**Meetings Etiquette** It was also proposed by CM as deputy chair that when NSB directors are present as SG members all comments must be addressed through the chair to the non-director members of SG. This would avoid the sensitive issue of director's comments inadvertently appearing as instructions to the SG. In other words avoiding SG members avoiding the feeling of being "told what to do" taking root within a group with strong personalities in it.

**Conversations and discussions outwith meetings.** Concern was expressed by CM as deputy chair that for avoidance of misunderstandings it was important that channels of communication were clear, transparent and disciplined, and the SG or the Board of NSB did not fall victim to “meetings and discussions before meetings” where the Board or SG members inadvertently strayed into matters concerning the other. The rest of the group agreed. It was agreed that the SG Chair was the conduit between the Directors and the SG and that all matters should be referred through the SG Chair by both groups the Directors and the SG prior to being added to the Agendas for a meeting. It was pointed out that the culture set by this exercise would likely inform the bigger scheme post the ITT document and it was important that we are seen to be a model of how to run a project such as this.

**Action Point – Confirm at the next meeting that these policies are adopted by both directors and SG Group Members – by 22.10.2015**

**Secretary Post – Vacant** group to consider this and bring ideas to next meeting on how to resolve

**Action Points – Proposed Policies above to be considered and voted on by all members at the next meeting 22.10.2015.**

**AOB there was no other business the Chair thanked the members for attending and the meeting was closed at 20.00**

**Next meeting 22.10.2015 at HIE Office Portree**