

ANGUS COUNCIL

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE

21 APRIL 2009

**SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME
REGIONS (CPMR) AND NORTH SEA COMMISSION (NSC) EVENTS 2009-10**

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

<p>Abstract: This Report seeks approval for Elected Member nominations and representation at CPMR and NSC events in 2009-10.</p>

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee

- a) Approves travel and attendance by one nominated Elected Member to CPMR and NSC events as detailed in this Report.
- b) Approves travel and attendance by one nominated Elected Member to additional CPMR and NSC events as they arise during 2009-10.
- c) Delegates authority to the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council to agree which elected member will attend each CPMR or NSC events in terms of recommendations (a) and (b) hereof.
- d) Notes approval of attendance of officers at appropriate CPMR and NSC events during 2009-10.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)is a forum for approximately 28 EU countries from 160 peripheral maritime regions to have a stronger voice in Europe, while the North Sea Commission (NSC) with members from 71 regions around the North Sea, including Angus, represents the North Sea area vision and encourages joint working and cooperation through its Thematic Groups. Further details are attached at appendix 1.
- 2.2 Officers of Angus Council have attended meetings of the NSC Thematic Groups on an ad-hoc basis over recent years. An Elected Member and officer normally attend the annual NSC General Assembly and in 2008 also attended the CPMR General Assembly.
- 2.3 Since Angus Council joined the CPMR and NSC in their own right in 2008, officers have been encouraged to attend events and meetings more regularly to increase Angus Council's role and prominence, particularly in the NSC. Under Standing Orders, Directors are authorised to approve Officer attendance at such events within the EU subject to finance being available in the appropriate departmental revenue budget.

- 2.4 On 3 March 2009, an event was held in Forfar to raise awareness of further opportunities for participation, particularly for Elected Members. Key figures from both the CPMR and NSC outlined the work of the organisations and potential roles that Angus Council Elected Members could play including attendance at the General Assemblies and NSC Thematic Group membership.
- 2.5 Whereas Angus Council has experienced considerable success in drawing down funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) in the two previous programmes, 1994-99 and 2000- 2006, opportunities through the current programme 2007-2013 are limited and it is unlikely that any European funding will be available for the UK from these funds after 2013. In preparation for this expected eventuality, Angus Council Officers have, over the last few years, become more involved in the CPMR and NSC with a view to applying for funding in future years as it is likely to be the most likely source for European funding.
- 2.6 Although to date Angus Council has not directly benefited from funds, considerable preparatory work has been done to gain funding for a local food project (Infrastructure Services Report [274/08](#) North Sea Regional Food Initiative Project Ref) which is expected to be submitted later this year, and which if successful will provide matchfunding of 50% for the project.
- 2.7 As international partners are required for all bids, preparatory work in forming stable and economically beneficial partnerships is an essential part of the process of seeking funding.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Whilst some events and meetings are notified well in advance, there are occasions when Elected Member participation is requested at short notice.
- 3.2 It is therefore recommended that in order to allow Angus Council Elected Members and Officers to play a full and active role in both CPMR and NSC that:-
- An Elected Member be nominated to attend CPMR and NSC events known at this time. These are:-
 - North Sea Commission General Assembly, Haarlem, Holland, 24-26 June 2009. Proposed attendees: 1 Elected Member plus Angus Council's Senior External Funding Officer.
 - CPMR General Assembly, Gothenburg Sweden, 30 September – 2 October 2009. Proposed attendees: 1 Elected Member plus Angus Council's Development Manager.
 - An Elected Member be nominated to represent Angus Council on appropriate NSC Thematic Groups and attend future meetings and events in 2009/10 subject to confirmation of dates, and consider assuming the role of Chair/Vice Chair as vacancies arise. These groups are: Innovation and Education; Culture and Tourism; Sustainable Development; Marine Resources and Transport.

- 3.3 If approved, the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council will decide which elected member will attend the foregoing events.

4 BENEFITS

- 4.1 Active participation in these events and meetings can bring added value to Angus Council in terms of raising profile, collaborative project development, representation of Angus Council's views and best practice.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Without details of all forthcoming events and meetings it is difficult to provide a precise cost. However based on expenditure in 2008-09 and foreseeing increased attendance at events, it is estimated that travel, subsistence and accommodation for Elected Members and Officers will be in the region of £6,000 in 2009/10. This estimated cost of £6,000 can be contained within the Economic Development European Liaison Revenue Budget for 2009/10. It should however be noted that through its membership of the East of Scotland European Consortium (ESEC), the Council can make a request to cover Elected Member and/or Officer travel costs to EU events and meetings. This funding source will be pursued and if successful will be used to offset any costs incurred.

6 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

7 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The issues dealt with in this Report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An equalities impact assessment is not required.

8 SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

- 8.1 This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Single Outcome Agreement for Angus:

We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity

- Growth in tourism in Angus is achieved
- A good quality of life is enjoyed by all in Angus

9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Law & Administration and Head of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The benefits of membership of CPMR and NSC are wholly dependant on the active participation of Elected Members and Officers.

ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

ECDEV/DV/SMW/FM
15 April 2009

APPENDIX 1

Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) and North Sea Commission (NSC)

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) is made up of 154 regions from 26 countries across Europe.

It acts as a forum for peripheral maritime regions to have a stronger voice in Europe, and has very strong political input.

Its role is to facilitate co-operation between regions, share best practice, develop common positions where possible on key policy developments, act as a single voice, articulating the views of the peripheral regions and as a single body liaison with EU institutions and Member States.

1.2 CPMR STRUCTURE

The member regions from each country nominates one of their number as a representative to the Political Bureau, as well as a substitute member. They have a two-year term. The Political Bureau meets twice a year. It proposes policy guidelines for the Conference and implements the decisions adopted by the General Assembly.

The CPMR decided to organise itself into geographical commissions in order to make it easier to articulate the particular circumstances of each of the major sea basins.

Each geographical commission has its own organisational structure, so that it can promote its specific identity and cooperate on subjects of common interest, while contributing to the cohesion and unity of the CPMR.

These are:

- Atlantic Arc
- Inter-Mediterranean Commission
- Balkan and Black Sea Commission
- Baltic Sea Commission
- Islands Commission
- North Sea Commission (NSC)

1.3 NORTH SEA COMMISSION

Since 2008, Angus has had individual membership of the CPMR and NSC along with 6 other Scottish authorities (Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City, Highlands, Shetland Islands and Orkney Islands and Fife) who are all very actively involved. This also gives them individual voting rights. The costs to Angus Council to independently join CPMR and NSC for 2008 were £7,557.31. For 2009 the costs are £8,025.56.

The NSC has members from 71 regions from 8 countries around the North Sea (Scotland, England, France, Holland, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Sweden). There is a President and 2 Vice-Presidents, one of whom is Cllr Sandy Cluness of Shetland Islands Council – elected June 2007. There is also an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee outlines the goals and strategies of the NSC both internally and in relation to other relevant actors in the North Sea area, such as the Interministerial Conference on the North Sea, the national authorities, the EU (both the Commission and the Parliament) and to the CPMR (Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions of Europe).

The Scottish members on the Executive Committee are Cllr Katherine Dean of Aberdeen City Council and substitute is Cllr Anne Robertson of Aberdeenshire Council.

The Executive Committee has the overall responsibility for the work carried out in the North Sea Commission, and in the Thematic Groups under the NSC. To ensure close cooperation and an adequate level of information between the Executive Committee and the Thematic Groups, a member of the Executive Committee has been appointed as chairman for each of the Thematic Groups. This has given more political impetus to the work of the groups.

There are 5 Thematic Groups, covering areas of importance to the North Sea Region.

- Sustainable Development
 - Marine Resources
 - Culture & Tourism
 - Innovation & Education
 - Transport
- (see annex 1 for terms of reference for each group)

Elected members act as Chair and Vice-Chair(s) for each group. There is also an adviser for each group (see annex 2)

These groups bring together Elected Members and Officers with expertise and interest in these fields. Scottish elected members have to date played a very active role in all levels of the NSC. They are well placed to study common problems, identify solutions and exchange best practice. (please see annex 3 for details of elected member and officer involvement from East of Scotland local authorities)

The groups meet regularly and communicate via e-mail between meetings.

Some issues cut across more than one group (eg food as cultural and as tourism and economic development driver) and this encourages joint working across thematic areas and builds relationships between individuals and regions. This clearly helps when organising joint events and identifying opportunities for developing transnational projects.

Benefits:

- **Joint working on common issues**
- **Exchange of ideas and best practice**
- **Local input to CPMR and EU Policy**
- **Collective influence in CPMR**
- **Collective influence in Europe**

SECTION 2

2.1 ANGUS COUNCIL'S ROLE AND INPUT

Angus Council has to date not played an overly active role in the NSC. Responsibility for the central point of contact sits with the External Funding Manager in Economic Development. Information on current policy, forthcoming events, potential project ideas etc is coordinated and disseminated through this team. This is important in terms of linking the NSC with other EU policy work and programmes.

The External Funding Manager, Development and External Funding Manager and/or Head of Economic Development have regularly attended the North Sea Commission and CPMR Annual General Assemblies accompanied by the Convener of Corporate Services. These are useful events normally incorporating the opportunity to seek partners for transnational projects.

The External Funding Manager and Vice Convener of Infrastructure Services also attended a NSC event in 2005 looking at the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas and implications for the NSC and EU programmes.

Participation in the Thematic Groups has been ad hoc with the issue of officer time and financial resources being the main drawbacks to greater participation as many meetings are abroad. ESEC however are able to cover the travel costs of any officer or elected member wishing to attend a NSC event or meeting.

Recent Participation on Thematic Groups includes:

- Innovation and Education: Development and External Funding Manager
- Culture & Tourism – Marketing and Special Projects Manager; Towns Promotion Officer
- Sustainable Development – Planning Officer

In parallel with the work of the North Sea Commission is the North Sea Programme (one strand of Interreg IV programme). Again Angus Council has had limited involvement over the years and time and resources again being a barrier.

2.2 Opportunities

On 3 March a seminar on both CPMR and NSC was held in Forfar for elected members and officers. Speakers from both organisations outlined the background and function of their organisations and highlighted areas of interest and where

Angus Council could become more actively involved. In addition the head of economic development of Aberdeenshire Council gave a presentation on the benefits accrued to his council from participation in CPMR and NSC due to active officer and elected member involvement.

Importantly the thematic groups of the NSC:

- closely mirror key themes of the Angus Council Economic Development Strategy particularly sustainable development, innovation and identifying key tourism products such as food and cultural heritage as vital to the Angus economy;
- contributes to the outcomes of the Angus Community Plan including Sustainability, Business growth, Engaging Communities and Young people, and
- supports the Angus Council Corporate Plan objectives of maximising the economic potential for Angus, promoting safe and caring communities and healthy lifestyles, improving the environment and quality of life and promoting learning for all ages and abilities.

Enhanced participation in the working groups by relevant officers in the field with a coordinated approach retained by the External Funding team will increase opportunities for Angus Council to achieve key aims of its Strategy through the NSC and North Sea Programme.

Opportunities for participation in forthcoming events:

Innovation & Education Group meeting in Aberdeen 24th - 25th March 2009. (Officer and elected member). Future meetings in October 2009 and spring 2010

Officer and elected member representation at NSC General Assembly 23-26 June 2009, Holland

Officer and elected member representation at CPMR General Assembly 30 September – 2 October 2009, Gothenburg, Sweden and 29 September – 1 October 2010, Aberdeen

Opportunities for regular participation in thematic groups:

Elected member representation on innovation & education group

Elected member representation on culture & tourism group

Elected member as vice chair of sustainable development group (deadline for nominations is 2 March 2009).

Elected member representation on sustainable development group

Officer as adviser to sustainable development group

Elected member and officer representation on marine resources group

Elected member and officer representation on transport group

With the new North Sea Programme now on stream and the decrease in available funding from mainstream Structural Fund programmes such as ERDF and ESF in Scotland, it is an ideal time for Angus Council to become more actively involved in transnational projects Various potential opportunities have been identified:

- energy efficiency in buildings, village halls, business premises etc
- Tayscreen (approved)
- Food related projects
- Comenius programme school project on sustainable creativity (led by dundee college)
- healthy living project for young people (led by aberdeen city council)"

In addition much can be gained from increased best practice exchange with other regions.

It should be noted that through Angus Council's membership of East of Scotland European Consortium (ESEC) there is provision to request the costs of travel to EU events. On a case by case basis there may be scope for accommodation and subsistence also to be covered. In addition there is provision cover accommodation costs & expenses in the Economic Development revenue budget for 2009/10 under EU Liaison.

In order to fully participate and increase Angus Council's role and profile in the NSC and CPMR,

- **elected member support is vital to ensure that the importance of the NSC is recognised across members and throughout departments**
- **support is given to make officer time available to participate in thematic groups and in project development and implementation.**
- **Elected members nominate representatives to some or all of the thematic groups**
- **Elected members and officers attend the CPMR and NSC general assemblies on an annual basis**

Annex 1

North Sea Commission

Culture and Tourism Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved by the NSC Executive Committee, Aalborg 13 April 2007

Who we are

The Culture and Tourism Group is one of the thematic groups of the North Sea Commission (hereafter referred to as NSC). It was originally established 1995.

Every member region of the NSC may appoint members to the group. A Chair appointed by the Executive Committee of the NSC chairs the Group. The Executive also appoints two Vice-Chairs. The Chair of the Group is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee, with the two Vice-Chairs acting as substitutes.

The work of the group is co-ordinated by an Advisor appointed by the Executive Committee of the NSC.

Observers representing cultural organisations and institutions etc. may attend the meetings of the group.

How we work

The group's work is based on a strategic document, renewed and updated from time to time. Every year, the group produces an operational action plan, which is sent to the Executive Committee and the General Assembly of the NSC for approval.

The group normally has between 2 and 4 meetings per year. The Chair and the Vice-Chairs have divided amongst them the political responsibility for specific issues on the annual action plan, and the members of the group take on responsibility for a limited number of issues, assisting the Chair and Vice-Chairs and the Advisor.

The Advisor, in close liaison with the Chair and Vice-Chairs, and in consultation with all members, set the agenda for the meetings. Papers for the meetings are prepared by members, and by the Advisor.

The first meeting of the year normally discusses the action plan for the coming period. The second meeting normally prepares for the General Assembly of the NSC, and the third meeting will normally follow up decisions made by the General Assembly of the NSC. In addition, each meeting will focus on issues listed in the current action plan and any other relevant issue arising.

Our fields of responsibility and interest

As the North Sea Commission's thematic group for culture and tourism, our group is responsible for assisting the Executive Committee in matters relating to culture and tourism. Culture is here understood in its broadest meaning, including creative and performing arts, cultural heritage and museums, sports, leisure and youth work. However, the group has been concentrating its work on arts, cultural heritage and museums during the last 10 years.

Tourism is also understood in its broadest meaning, but the group's core competence lies within the field of cultural tourism.

The group will also be asked to give input relating to its area of competence on whatever issue the Executive is working on.

What we do

The Group work through

- A. Informal contact (e-mail, telephone conferences)
- B. Formal meetings
- C. Informal meetings of smaller (ad hoc) groups preparing specific issues
- D. Lobbying activity, where selected members meet for lobbying and fact-finding missions in Brussels and elsewhere where and when needed

The Group may also arrange conferences and seminars, both on its own and in co-operation with other thematic groups and/or other organisations. The group also seeks to work closely with the other thematic groups of the NSC, and is also striving to have good working relations with other geographic commissions of the CPMR and with other European organisations working with culture or tourism.

The Group works with a number of different issues, reflecting the scope of its name.

The Group is primarily concerned with the role that culture, heritage, history and identity play in place-based sustainable regional and economic development. The Group is promoting culture and heritage as assets for innovation and sustainable tourism development.

The Group is also encouraging co-operation between member regions of the NSC in these areas.

The areas of interest include (but do not exclude other issues):

- Cultural policies and programmes of the European Union (and its individual member states and of Norway where relating to North Sea co-operation)
- Cultural tourism policies and programmes of the European Union
- European Union policies and programmes on youth, leisure and sports
- Other programmes and initiatives of the European Union where culture, heritage or cultural tourism are involved
- Cultural co-operation and exchange between the member regions of the NSC
- Cultural tourism co-operation between the member regions of the NSC
- Cultural heritage co-operation between member regions of the NSC

The group's remit also includes measures to increase awareness among the general public of the historic and cultural links around and across the North Sea.

Links to other thematic groups

The Culture and Tourism Group is linking into the work of other thematic groups on several issues. Good co-operation and division of work should be established between the groups to achieve best results.

Areas of overlapping interests include:

- Maritime resources group: The role of culture, identity and heritage in developing good coastal communities and in developing sustainable coastal tourism
- Innovation and Education group: The role of culture, identity and heritage in innovative development, the value of understanding culture, identity and heritage in education.

- Sustainable development group: The value of man-made landscapes and the challenges in maintaining such landscapes in a sustainable way. Development of sustainable tourism.
- Transport group: Sustainable tourism and its link to good transportation solutions.

North Sea Commission

Transport group

Draft revised Terms of Reference (ToR) September 2006

Introduction

This revision of the ToR has been carried out as a response to the re-structuring of the NSC, as decided by the Executive meeting and Annual Business meeting in Aviemore on 14 June. The ToR has been revised in accordance with the format of the revised ToR of the Culture and Tourism Group, which is supposed to constitute a standard format for all groups. However, in order to integrate Aims and objectives, we had to invent a new category called What we want to achieve a category felt to be missing in the format of the CTG. Furthermore, in order to maintain a link to the current ToR, we have found it useful to maintain the old headings as subcategories.

As the neither the remit, nor the name of the Transport group is directly affected by the re-structuring, the only substantially new section in the ToR, is the section Links to other thematic groups.

Who we are

THE TRANSPORT GROUP WAS ESTABLISHED 1991 AND IS ONE OF 6 THEMATIC GROUPS SET UP BY THE NORTH SEA COMMISSION.

Administration

The group is chaired by a regional politician, assisted by until 2 political Vice-Chairs. A Coordinator (normally a Council officer) is responsible for the administration of the group (i.e. preparing and following up meetings, drafting documents, reports and resolutions, reporting etc.). An assistant Co-ordinator may be appointed by the group if considered necessary to carry out the work of the group in a satisfactory manner. The Chair, Vice-Chairs and Co-ordinator are all appointed by the NSC Executive Committee. The Chair or Co-ordinator reports about the work of the group at Executive Committee meetings and in an annual report to the General Assembly.

Membership

Membership is open to all regional authorities and other transport-related stakeholders in the North Sea Region, such as ports, terminal operators, transport providers, transport users, research institutions and universities & colleges.

What we want to achieve

Aim

Improve cohesion, accessibility and competitiveness in the North Sea Region (NSR) through the development of sustainable and efficient transport solutions

Objectives

Improve knowledge in the transport sector

Facilitate transport planning among regional authorities and businesses

Influence and develop EU and national transport policies to the benefit of the NSR
 Facilitate networks and partnerships among all relevant stakeholders
 Raise awareness on the requirements for efficient and sustainable transport
 Promote transport solutions which may improve the competitiveness of the business community

What we do

Main roles and functions of Transport group

- Monitoring key developments in the industry and within policies at all levels
- Facilitating co-operation and partnerships among relevant stakeholders
- Liaison between industry actors (i.e. businesses, transport users) and policy makers
- Forum for the exchange of information and experience among relevant stakeholders
- Understanding the needs of different transport users and convey the needs to policy makers at relevant levels
- Developing Interreg and other projects
- Disseminating knowledge through conferences, seminars and studies
- Synthesising and disseminating findings from Interreg & other projects
- Influencing EU and national transport policies
- Adviser and secretariat for the NSC Executive Committee on transport issues
- Co-operation with other NSC thematic groups
- Interaction with the CPMR and other geographical Commissions

Key issues

- Sustainable transport
- Accessibility
- Competitiveness, growth and innovation in line with the Lisbon strategy
- Intermodal transport links, including ports and combined terminals
- Short sea shipping, incl. Motorways of the Seas
- Significance of ICT in transport
- Integrated spatial & transport planning
- Infrastructure pricing policies
- Need to improve physical transport infrastructure

How we work

Organisation of work, meetings

The work is as a main rule organised in one plenary group. Sub-groups or Task Forces may be established for projects and special events (conferences, seminars etc.) The group will produce a detailed annual work / action plan, including specific activities with measurable outputs, on the basis of the ToR. This plan must formulate clear priorities and concentrate on the specific areas where the group could make a difference, and in particular on areas where transnational co-operation is needed. The Work / action plan must be submitted to and endorsed by the NSC Executive Committee, and presented to the Annual Business meeting of the NSC General Assembly.

The group normally meets three times a year (winter, spring and autumn). The meetings will normally start at lunch day 1 and end at lunch day 2. Sub-group meetings may be held outside or in conjunction with plenary meetings.

THE MEETING PROGRAMME WILL NORMALLY INCLUDE SOME SORT OF LEARNING ELEMENT, INCLUDING PRESENTATIONS OF OR VISITS TO TRANSPORT-RELATED

FACILITIES IN THE HOST REGION. THE HOST WILL NORMALLY MAKE A BRIEF PRESENTATION OF HIS REGION, WITH EMPHASIS ON KEY DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR, INCLUDING GOOD PRACTICE IN THIS AREA. THE AGENDA SHALL ALWAYS BE OPEN FOR THE EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE AND BEST PRACTICE SOLUTIONS BETWEEN MEMBER REGIONS.

Links to other thematic groups

Several interfaces and overlaps exist between transport and the policy /issue areas addressed by the other thematic groups. Needless to say, transport is not an end in it-self, but a means for promoting regional development in the large sense. Efficient and sustainable transport solutions are vital for the accessibility of peripheral & maritime regions, for the competitiveness of the business community, for the functioning of the labour market, for tourism, education, leisure activities and for ordinary social interaction among people. On the other hand, transport has got negative impacts on the environment, health and safety, requiring the development of environmentally more friendly and safer means of transport.

Examples of interfaces and overlaps with other thematic groups (not necessarily exhaustive):

- Culture & Tourism Group: Role of efficient and sustainable transport solutions for tourism (both with regards to travel options to main destination and travel within destination), the impact and role of low cost carriers, public transport solutions to and within tourist destinations, cruises
- Innovation & Education group: Significance of transport for implementing the Lisbon Agenda, role of transport for the competitiveness of the business community and the well-functioning of labour markets, hereunder commuting, public-private partnerships, value chain management in logistics, city logistics, cruises, innovation in the transport sector, R&D within the transport sector, recruitment to transport trade & professions, education and training of transport professionals (pilots, sea farers, bus drivers), awareness-raising among stakeholders and general public as to requirements for safe and sustainable transport, development of alternative fuels (cf. renewable energy)
- Maritime Resources: Significance of transport for maritime policy and coastal zone management, transport solutions for sea food, maritime safety for fishing vessels, education, training and recruitment to maritime professions
- Sustainable development: Impact of transport on environment, safety and health, development of more environmentally friendly and safer transport solutions (i.e. promote shift from road to rail and sea, public transport and cycling etc), development of less polluting fuels, (i.e. bio-fuels, hydrogen etc), environmental impact of shipping (i.e. Clean Ship approach, fuel directive etc)

North Sea Commission Maritime Resources and Fisheries Group

***A draft for new* TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Who we are

The Maritime Resources & Fisheries Group is one of the thematic groups of the North Sea Commission (hereafter referred to as NSC). The current North Sea Commission Fisheries Group was founded in Aberdeen on 30 August 1993 by Grampian, Shetland and Sogn og Fjordane Regional Councils. The concept of a Fisheries Group existed since Humberside (1991) NSC General Assembly with the aim to further partnerships and experiences in fisheries. At a meeting of the Fisheries Group on 19 November 1993 (Aberdeen) the aim and

objectives were confirmed, key fisheries interests explored and a work programme established for 1994. Every member region of the NSC may appoint members to the group. A Chair appointed by the Executive Committee of the NSC chairs the Group. The Executive also appoints two Vice-Chairs. The Chair of the Group is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee, with the two Vice-Chairs acting as substitutes.

The work of the group is co-ordinated by an Advisor appointed by the Executive Committee of the NSC and supported by:

- Project co-ordinator
- Aquaculture and renewable energy specialist
- Liaison person (between groups)
- Web-page editor

This will help ensure active participation and responsibility for more group members.

Observers representing scientific, political (both national and EU) organisations and institutions etc. may attend the meetings of the group.

How we work

The group's work is based on a strategic document, renewed and updated from time to time. Every year, the group produces an operational action plan, which is sent to the Executive Committee and the General Assembly of the NSC for approval.

The group normally has 2 meetings per year. The Chair and the Vice-Chairs have divided amongst them the political responsibility for specific issues on the annual action plan, and the members of the group take on responsibility for a limited number of issues, assisting the Chair and Vice-Chairs and the Advisor.

The Advisor, in close liaison with the Chair and Vice-Chairs, and in consultation with, Project co ordinator, Aquaculture and renewable energy specialist, Liaison person and all members, set the agenda for the meetings. Papers for the meetings are prepared by members, and by the Advisor.

The first meeting of the year normally discusses the action plan for the coming period. The second meeting normally prepares for the General Assembly of the NSC.

Our Aim

As Fishing is one of the most important traditional industries around the North Sea and is vital to the local economies, the North Sea Commission Fisheries Group main aim is to:

Maximise the quality of life in Coastal Regions- this may be achieved by:

Sustain the socio economies of fishing dependent communities.

To ensure the maintenance of a north sea fishery for future generations.

Promote areas of possible diversification and opportunities for development within the fishing industry and dependent communities.

Support the fishing communities in collective and unified representation.

Work within an EU framework to achieve economic and bio-sustainable fishing policies.

Encourage added value to be carried out locally, enhancing the economic development and sustainability of the local communities.

Develop a framework for transnational co-operation between fishing dependent areas.

Provide a forum where industry, public sector and all other relevant parties can meet to discuss areas of concern and share best practice.

Work with Partners at locally, nationally and internationally to create a level playing field in fisheries management.

Supporting the fishing industry aquaculture, catching sector (inshore and offshore) and onshore sector.

Ensure the process for closed and protected areas includes all stakeholders.

Our fields of responsibility and interest

As the North Sea Commission's thematic group for Marine Resources and Fisheries our group is responsible for assisting the Executive Committee in matters relating to Marine resources and Fisheries and dependent communities.

Our work includes **Key Issues:**

Coastal zone management

Fisheries strategies

Fisheries policies

Economic dependence

Aquaculture

Selectivity of fishing gear

Quality assurance including eco-labelling

Coastal fisheries

Working in partnership with other users of the North Sea.

Development of Science Fisheries Partnerships

Continue to support NSRAC

Inshore Fisheries Network

Safety at Sea

The group will also be asked to give input relating to its area of competence on whatever issue the Executive is working on.

What we do

The Group work through

- A. Informal contact (e-mail, telephone conferences)
- B. Formal meetings
- C. Informal meetings of smaller (ad hoc) groups preparing specific issues
- D. Lobbying activity, where Political Spokespersons meet for lobbying and fact-finding missions in Brussels and elsewhere where and when needed

The Group may also arrange conferences and seminars, both on its own and in co-operation with other thematic groups and/or other organisations. The group also seeks to work closely with the other thematic groups of the NSC, and is also striving to have good working relations with other geographic commissions of the CPMR and with other European organisations working with Fisheries Issues.

The Group works with a number of different issues, reflecting the scope of its name.

The Group is primarily concerned with the role that marine resources and Fisheries play in place based sustainable regional and economic development of fishing dependent communities

The Group is also encouraging co-operation between member regions of the NSC in these areas.

The areas of interest include (but do not exclude other issues):

- Marine Resources and Fisheries policies and programmes of the European Union (and its individual member states and of Norway where relating to North Sea co-operation)
- Fisheries policies and programmes of the European Union
- Other programmes and initiatives of the European Union where Marine Resources and Fisheries are involved
- Co-operation and exchange between the member regions of the NSC
- Ensure fisheries is highlighted within EU Maritime Policy

Links to other thematic groups

The Maritime Resources and Fisheries Group is linking into the work of other thematic groups on several issues. Good co-operation and division of work should be established between the groups to achieve best results.

Areas of overlapping interests include

Culture & Tourism Group: The role of culture, identity and heritage in developing good coastal communities and in developing sustainable coastal tourism

Innovation and Education group: The role of education and training for those people who may wish to pursue a career in the Maritime and Fisheries sectors.

Sustainable development group: The development of sustainable fishing communities and fisheries sector.

Transport group: Sustainable transport of marine resources. ports sustainable efficient fuel

NORTH SEA COMMISSION SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Group (formerly the Environment Group) is one of the Thematic Groups set up by the North Sea Commission. Although the remit of this Group includes all aspects of sustainability, each Thematic Group needs to take responsibility for sustainability of issues relevant to them. The Sustainable Development Group will lead on natural resources, climate change, regional planning and development, energy and renewable energy, as well as innovation and technology aspects. A supporting role will be adopted to other strands of sustainability covered by other Thematic Groups.

Vision

To encourage the development of sustainable communities, the sustainable use of resources and the development of policies and actions which take full account of environmental requirements.

Aims

The aim of the Group is to input into and progress issues that affect local and regional authorities bordering the North Sea by co-ordinating and initiating projects involving all NSC members or on a partnership basis. The Group plays a dual role, helping both individual local authorities and larger regions to develop.

The Group will seek to influence future research and future EU and national policies. The Group will also take steps to encourage a heightened awareness of the North Sea as an important ecological area.

The Sustainable Development Group will seek to ensure that sustainable development principles are reflected in, and form a key consideration of, the work of the other Thematic Groups. Furthermore the Group will follow the implementation of the EU s Strategy for Sustainable Development (the Göteborg Strategy) on behalf of the NSC and advise the Executive Committee as well as other Thematic Groups as required.

Organisation and Administration

Membership is open to all NSC members. Other relevant stakeholders may attend meetings and join other activities, as required.

A regional politician, assisted by two political vice-chairs, chairs the Sustainable Development Group. If not already a member of the NSC Executive Committee, the Chair of the Group becomes an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee, with the two Vice-Chairs acting as substitutes. The Chair also acts as the official spokesperson for the NSC on issues covered by the remit of the specific Thematic Group.

A Co-ordinator (normally a Council officer) is responsible for the administration of the Group.

The Chair, Vice-Chairs and Co-ordinator are appointed by the NSC Executive Committee.

The Chair or Co-ordinator reports about the work of the Group at Executive Committee meetings and in an Annual Report to the General Assembly.

The Sustainable Development Group will liaise with other Thematic Groups to identify and work on areas of common interest.

Activities

The Sustainable Development Group will focus on a number of areas. These areas of interest include (but are not constrained to):

Bio-diversity and Landscape

Climate Change working to mitigate and adapt

Energy (renewable and energy efficiency)

Innovation

Integrated Coastal Zone Management

Maritime Planning and Development

Natural Resource Use

Pollution

Regional Development

Sustainable shipping

The Groups yearly activities will be specified in the annual Work Plan, subject to any changes that may occur.

A yearly Conference will be arranged in connection with the Group's Annual Meeting. This should focus on important environmental/sustainable development issues, and encourage the broadest possible attendance from the member regions (and others), both politicians and officials.

A Steering Group (*Note: this group could have another name!*) meets in different member areas, as appropriate throughout the year, to undertake business and progress work. The Steering Group consists of the Chair, the Vice-Chairs and the Co-ordinator, plus one Country Representative and a substitute from each North Sea country, which has members

in the NSC. The Country Representatives have the responsibility to maintain regular contacts with their colleagues in other Sustainable Development Group members in their country. The Steering Group meetings may have a thematic part open to wider participation.

For some issues smaller working groups will be created to pursue specific tasks. These will be fed back into the Group at subsequent meetings.

The Group will research and debate issues of interest or under consultation in order for a cohesive response to be put forward as part of the NSC.

The Group will work towards funding of joint projects and to help member regions to find partners for new projects. It will also work to improve horizontal (between regions, local authorities and nations) and vertical (between EU/national/regional local) flows of information and to be actively involved in the planning and implementation of relevant European programmes.

The Sustainable Development Group will promote sustainability throughout the Thematic Groups through periodic review of minutes and ad hoc advice provided. The Group will act as a contact point for matters raised by other Groups regarding sustainability and best practice advice. This will provide a balance between the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas.

The Group will make use of technology to ensure effective communication and dissemination of information. This will work towards reducing the environmental effects resulting from travel.

Additional text to be included, if there is need for a section on Links to other Thematic Groups:

Examples of interfaces and overlaps with other Thematic Groups (not necessarily exhaustive):

Culture & Tourism Group

Promote Sustainable Tourism Reduce the negative environmental impact of all tourism both large-scale mass tourism and small-scale eco-tourism.

Innovation & Education Group

Promote Sustainable Innovation in various branches, such as energy, marine technology, ICT, etcetera. Innovation in this case is not merely inventing things, but also developing newer and more efficient working methods and using existent knowledge in innovative ways. Promoting the inclusion of sustainability in all education, both in theory (in curriculae) and in practice (such as environmental adaption of school buildings, etcetera).

Maritime Resources Group

Supporting Sustainable Fisheries through i.e. protection of ecosystems as base for sustainable fish stocks.

Reducing the negative environmental impact of fisheries.

Transports Group

Promoting Sustainable Transports by supporting for instance Short Sea Shipping.

Reducing the negative environmental impact of transports on land and sea and in the air.

Reducing the need for transport by promoting more efficient transport systems and modes.

North Sea Commission

Innovation and Education Group

Terms of Reference

Who we are

The Innovation and Education Group (IEG) is one of the thematic groups of the North Sea Commission (hereafter referred to as NSC). The group was established in June 2006.

Every member region of the NSC may appoint members to IEG. A Chair appointed by the Executive Committee of the NSC chairs the Group. The Executive also appoints two Vice-Chairs. The Chair of the Group is an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee, with the two Vice-Chairs acting as substitutes.

The work of the Group is co-ordinated by a Co-ordinator appointed by the Executive Committee of the NSC.

Observers representing organisations and institutions related to our work etc. may attend the meetings of the IEG.

HOW WE WORK

Every year, the Group produces a Work Plan, which is sent to the Executive Committee and the General Assembly of the NSC for approval.

IEG normally has 2 meetings per year prepared by the Strategic Group. The Chair and the Vice-Chairs have divided amongst them the political responsibility for specific issues on the annual Work Plan, and the members of the group take on responsibility for a limited number of issues, assisting the Chair and Vice-Chairs and the Co-ordinator.

The Co-ordinator, in close liaison with the Chair and Vice-Chairs, and in consultation with all members, set the agenda for the meetings. Papers for the meetings are prepared by members, and by the Co-ordinator.

Normally the IEG will hold one meeting 6 weeks prior to the NSC Executive Spring meeting. One purpose of this IEG meeting will be to agree the workplan to be submitted to the NSC Executive Committee. Another task to be undertaken at the IEG meeting is to prepare for the General Assembly of the NSC.

The second meeting of the IEG will normally follow up decisions made by the General Assembly of the NSC. In addition, each meeting will focus on issues listed in the current action plan and any other relevant issue arising.

The IEG may develop sub-groups and project groups to work on specific matters.

THE IEG STRATEGIC GROUP

Members of the Strategic Group are: Chair, Vice-chairs and their supporting officers, and the Co-ordinator, and may from time to time be joined by other IEG members. The Strategic Group meets every year - whenever necessary – to review and agree the work plan of the Innovation and Education Group. Agenda: The Work Plan, reports to the NSC, Work Plan, future meetings etc.

The way we do things

The IEG works through:

- A. Informal contact (e-mail, telephone conferences)
- B. Formal meetings
- C. Informal meetings of smaller (ad hoc) groups preparing specific issues
- D. Lobbying activity, where selected members meet for lobbying and fact-finding missions in Brussels and elsewhere where and when needed
- E. Exchange best practice between members, and other thematic groups
- F. The IEG may also arrange conferences and seminars, both on its own and in co-operation with other thematic groups and/or other organisations.
- G. Work closely with the other thematic groups of the NSC.
- H. Develop a network for co-operation

The IEG works with a number of different issues, reflecting the scope of its name. The Group is primarily concerned with the role that innovation, knowledge and education play in developing sustainable regional societies.

The IEG is also encouraging co-operation between member regions of the NSC in these areas.

The areas of interest include (but do not exclude other issues):

- Policies, programmes and initiatives of the European Union where innovation and education are involved (and its individual member states and of Norway where relating to North Sea co-operation)
- Co-operation and exchange between the member regions of the NSC
- Youth co-operation and exchange between member regions of the NSC

LINKS TO OTHER THEMATIC GROUPS

The Innovation and Education Group will link into the work of the other thematic groups on a range of issues. Good co-operation and division of work should be established between the groups to achieve best results.

Annex 2

	CHAIR	VICE CHAIR	VICE CHAIR	ADVISER
Culture & Tourism	Cllr. Harry van Waveren Zeeland County Council, Holland	Cllr. Wendy Mawer Suffolk County Council UK	Cllr. Lars Nordstrøm, Region Västra Götaland, Sweden	Geir Sor-Reime Rogaland County Council Norway
Innovation & Education	Cllr Ole Sørensen Region North Denmark	Cllr Stella Duneufjardin Region Nord-Pas de Calais France	Cllr Kate Dean Aberdeen City Scotland	Erik Lindboe Rogaland County Council Norway
Sustainable Development	Cllr Andreas Lervik Norway	Cllr. Henrik Ringbaek Madsen, Nordjyllands Amt, Denmark	Cllr John Lamb Southend Council UK	Yasa Ratnayeke Aberdeen City
Marine Resources	Cllr Anders Fasth Västra Götaland Region Sweden	Cllr. Josie Simpson, Shetland Islands Council Scotland	Cllr Harry Jensen Region Midtjylland Denmark	Ann Bell Aberdeenshire Council
Transport	Cllr Leif Blanquist Västra Götaland Region Sweden	Cllr. Anne Robertson, Aberdeenshire Council, Scotland	Cllr. Poul Weber, Region Syddanmark, Denmark	Jon Halvard Eide Norway

Annex 3

ESEC Member Involvement in NSC

Authority	Involvement
Aberdeenshire	Full members of NSC and CPMR James Knowles - participant in Innovation & Education Group Philip McKay - participant in Transport Group Keith Newton - participant in Tourism Group Ann Bell - Advisor to Marine Resources Group

	Cllr. Anne Robertson - Vice-Chair of Transport Group (accompanied by officer as Member Support) and substitute representative on NSC Executive Committee
Aberdeen City	Full members of NSC and CPMR Cllr Kate Dean is Scottish Representative on the NSC Executive Committee and Vice Chair of the Innovation and Education Thematic Group Yasa Ratnayake – acting adviser to Sustainable Development Group
Angus	Neil Prentice – participant in Innovation and Education Group Craig Lafferty – ad hoc participant in Culture & Tourism Group
Clacks	No involvement
Dundee	No involvement
E Lothian	No involvement
Edinburgh	No involvement
Falkirk	No involvement
Fife	Full members of NSC and CPMR Dominique Robertson - participant in Innovation and Education Group
M Lothian	No involvement
Moray	No involvement
PKC	No direct involvement but previously elected member was chair of the Innovation and Education group.
Stirling	No involvement
W Lothian	No involvement