

**REPORT TO: WEALTHIER AND FAIRER STRATEGIC GROUP ON 3
DECEMBER 2009**

SUBJECT: MORAY BUSINESS PANEL

BY: HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS ENTERPRISE MORAY

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To update the Wealthier and Fairer Strategic Group on progress on structuring the business panel and the supplementary online panel which HIE has established.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Wealthier and Fairer Strategic Group endorses the proposed structure and occurrence of access panel meetings

2.2 That the Strategic Group notes the use of online access panel as an additional tool available to harvest business views.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As part of the Community Planning process under the Wealthier theme the business panel is intended to be the route by which the views of businesses can be obtained.

3.2 To date this has been achieved through a meeting of business people and representative groups across Moray. The last meeting of this nature was held in January where the theme was transport.

3.3 It is proposed that a pattern of two meetings per annum be established, one in March, one in September. These meetings will involve around twenty individuals consisting of the following;

Moray based businesses	12
Moray chamber of Commerce	1 rep
Moray Tourism Dev Group	1 rep
Moray Council	2 reps
Scottish Council for Development & Industry	1 rep
Federation of Small Business	1 rep
Institute of Directors	1 rep
HIE	2 reps

3.4 The outcome of these meetings will be fed back to the Wealthier and Fairer Strategic Group, and if appropriate then onto the wider Community Planning Board.

3.5 In addition to the regularised meetings, HIE has established an online business panel across all other local authority areas. This online panel would be segmented, such that geographic and sector specific views could be sought online.

- 3.6 It is proposed this online panel consist of the business panel outlined above, but also a wider sample of the businesses which HIE Moray account manages. It is not proposed the online panel expand much beyond 30 to 50, as it's recognised the wider Moray Access panel is established to collect the wider community view

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

- (a) **Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan**
The information collated from this process will help inform the development of the SOA and wider Wealthier theme.
- (b) **Policy and Legal**
When contacting business and consultees by e-mail HIE will firstly seek written consent to ensure compliance with data protection regulations.
- (c) **Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**
The costs for hosting, facilitation and secretariat function for the meetings and the online panel will be met by HIE.
- (d) **Consultations**
The purpose of this work is to ensure consultation with business occurs.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 We seek endorsement of the above recommendations from the Wealthier and Fairer Strategic Group**

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