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Item 2

**46th NSC Executive Committee Meeting,
2 November 2007.**

REPORTS

Enclosed are the following reports;

- From the thematic groups; due to illness are there not report from the Marine Resources group, the group will give its report at the meeting.
- From the CPMR GA, an oral report
- From the NSC-BSC cooperation
- From the CoR

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. For discussion and information



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Sustainable Development group.

I). The Strategic group (Chair and VC's) met for the first time 26th September.
See minutes below;

Agenda

- 1) Welcome by chair, Cllr. Andreas Lervik
Cllr. Andreas Lervik, welcomed everybody to the meeting and thanked Aberdeen City Council for hosting it.
- 2) Joint Annual Conference
The annual conference was discussed in detail and YR was tasked with following up with Linnea on the following issues:
 - a. Conference to held last week March or first week April.
 - b. Topics (see attached draft) were approved by the group with the exception of Topic 4 which needed more clarification.
 - c. Look for linkage with Innovation and education group and request the IEG to contribute to one of the topics
 - d. YR to speak to Hans and inform him that the conference will be held in the County Council of Vasterbotten in Umea and gain his support for it.
- 3) NSC / BSC Co-operation – Annelie Stark's e mail
YR to write to Annelie and inform her that we are working with the Baltic Sea Energy Group in drawing up plans for our Annual Conference next year with them
- 4) Work Plans
The work plans were discussed in length and it was decided that we required a results section added to it. It was also decided to delete items that we were not going to follow up on.
- 5) NSC – Challenges for Thematic Groups
It was agreed that the SDG will work closely with the Passive House Project and the Dry Port project. This will require the SDG members to attend project meetings, study tours and annual conferences of these projects.
- 6) AOB.
Cllr Andreas Lervik to inform the CPMR Energy Group that Cllr Henrik Ringbaek Madsen will be the SDG representative. Cllr John Lamb will represent Cllr Andreas Lervik at the NSC Executive Meeting which is being held in Cambridge on the 2nd of November 2007.

II): The energy group from BSC in developing our joint conference for 2008. Further meeting have been arranged for October and December.

III). Gave input to the Climate change paper which NSC submitted to CPMR for their final paper adopted at the CPMR GA.

IV). The Adviser the BSSSC annual conference and will also be attending the CPMR energy conference in November.



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Culture & Tourism Group Report to Executive Committee, Cambridge 2 November 2007

The Culture & Tourism Group has not met since the NSC General Assembly at Brunstad in June 2007. There was a meeting, Meeting XXXII, at Stavern close to Brunstad leading up to the General Assembly. The XXXIII Meeting was held last week in Norwich. An oral report will be given from the latter.

Since the autumn of 2004, Cllr Annelie Stark of Västra Götaland has been the Chair of the group. She was Vice-Chair since the autumn of 2003. At our XXXIII Meeting last week, she resigned after having chaired 8 meetings of the group.

At the ExCom meeting in Aalborg, Cllr Wendy Mawer from East of England Regional Assembly was elected new Vice-Chair after Cllr Alan Livingstone (Perth & Kinross Council), and at the ExCom meeting at Brunstad, Cllr Harry van Waveren (Province of Zeeland) was elected new Vice-Chair after Cllr. Jacques Suurmond (Province of Zeeland).

12 delegates, representing two Danish regions, one UK region, one Swedish region, one Dutch region region and four Norwegian regions, attended the XXXII Meeting in Stavern. Vestfold County Council hosted the meeting.

The East of England Regional Assembly hosted the XXXIII Meeting.

At our XXXII Meeting at Stavern, the Commission Communication on a Cultural Strategy for the European Union was the main item on the agenda, as it was also at the recent XXXIII Meeting.

The Stavern meeting also discussed changes in our work plan to reflect priorities of the Executive Committee, and a revised work plan is presented to the ExCom here for approval.

Also discussed was the possible co-operation with the BSC. Currently, there is no counterpart of our group in the BSC, but discussions are now ongoing on how concrete co-operation projects can be developed.

The group has followed closely the work of the ECTN – European Cultural Tourism Network, and the ongoing developments within the European Union to put tourism higher on the agenda. Recent developments in the CPMR with the establishment of a tourism intercom group have strengthened this approach.

With the recent approval of the Interreg IV B North Sea programme and other EU funding programmes, the Culture and Tourism group also acts as a project bourse.



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Progress report of NSC Transport group, June – October 2007

Please find below an account of the main activities of the NSC Transport group in the period since the last Executive meeting on 22 June.

- Meeting of NSC Transport group, Kolding, South Denmark Region, 2 – 3 October

The agenda focused on the follow-up and implementation of the 2007 – 2008 Work Plan (division of labour, timing of activities). The group is happy to observe that all members of the political chairmanship troika attended the meeting – something which is an almost unprecedented event in the history of the Transport group. It is hoped that this could be interpreted as a sign of stronger political commitment to transport issues in the NSC. The meeting decided to investigate the feasibility of organising at least one joint meeting with the Transport group of the Baltic Sea Commission (BSC) per year. In this context, one should also consider to invite other regional Baltic Sea organisations involved with transport issues (as the BSC is not the only one). The BSC Transport group has also signalled a wish for stronger cooperation with the NSC.

The meeting also discussed how to follow up the thematic seminar on energy in the transport sector from May 2007. The group stated its readiness to contribute to future NSC events within this field. The meeting decided to collect and compile good practice solutions from the NSC member regions on the use of more sustainable fuel in the transport sector, including use of renewable energy and fuel saving schemes. Such good practice should be published at the NSC home page, and could also serve as input to future “energy events” organised by the NSC.

Finally, the meeting decided to formulate a NSC response to the consultation on the EU Green Paper on Urban Transport which will be open until mid March 2008. The East of England Regional Assembly has agreed to take the lead for this task. The draft response will be submitted to the Spring meeting of the Executive Committee.

The next meeting of the group (Winter 2008) will be hosted by the East of England Regional Assembly. This could be taken as a sign of stronger involvement from UK regions in the work of the Transport group, something which is both very welcome and needed.

Participation in external events of relevance

The adviser and some group members attended a seminar on maritime issues (including transport) under the Interreg IVB North Sea Programme in Stavanger on 20 -21 September, organised by the Programme Secretariat and the Rogaland County Council. The main purpose of the seminar was to develop maritime projects for the first call of the North Sea Programme which opened on 17 September. The Adviser and some group members have since then been involved in the development of a project proposal on sea motorways which was submitted to the first call.



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The adviser has taken part in two meetings within the Baltic Sea Programme project InterBaltic, discussing the development of a common transport strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. This work is also involving the acting Coordinator of the BSC Transport group in his capacity as manager for the aforementioned project. These meetings also gave an opportunity to discuss BSC – NSC cooperation on transport.

In the context of the Baltic Sea, it is also relevant to mention that the Adviser will represent the CPMR North Sea Commission as a speaker at the transport session at the Baltic Development Forum Summit in Tallinn on 6 November. He will also take part in the meeting of the High Level Group on sustainable growth and transport in the Baltic Sea, consisting of government officials, representatives of Pan-Baltic organisations and business executives.

Vice Chair Anne Robertson and the Adviser attended the CRPM General Assembly in Florence on 17 – 19 October, where the session on EU Maritime policy was of greatest relevance from a transport perspective.



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PROGRESS REPORT INNOVATION AND EDUCATION GROUP

1. Introduction

The aim of this report is to summarise the work of the North Sea Commission's new thematic group "Innovation and Education Group" (IEG).

2. IEG Chair, Vice-Chairs and Advisor

- Chair: Cllr. Ole B. Sørensen, Region North Denmark
- Vice-Chairs:
 - Cllr. Stella Duneufjardin, Region of Nord-pas de Calais, France
 - Cllr. Kate Dean, Aberdeen City, Scotland
- Adviser: Erik Lindboe (Rogaland County Council, Norway)

3. Meetings

The IEG's Strategic Group meets whenever necessary to plan future group activities, revise the Work Plan aso. The Strategic Group is: Chair, vice-chairs and advisor, plus a limited number of supporting officers.

The Strategic Group met in Nord-pas de Calais's offices in Brussels 14th September 2007 to plan the next Innovation & Education group meeting, which will be held in Lille, France, 14th – 15th November 2007.

Cllr. Ole B. Sørensen, Cllr. Kate Dean and adviser Erik Lindboe attended the CPMR GA in Florence 17th – 19th October 2007.

4. Work Plan / Activities

The Work Plan has been updated, and the number of actions reduced as requested by the NSC, also to suit our way of working and our ability to go through with the actions listed in the WP. The IEG is now working with all the items of the WP. We still have to have a closer look at Food to see if we can develop a project together with other NSC thematic groups. The group adviser has contacted the Baltic Sea Commission to see how the groups from the two commissions can cooperate, also in relationship with the CPMR. There is contact between the IEG and the Sustainable Development Group re. energy and the so-called Passive House Interreg project.

The IEG wants to market both the group and the NSC, and will produce Newsletters and press releases to disseminate what's on the agenda.

Some of the WP items the group has focus on:

- The North Sea Schools' Sustainability Network.

This project has been developed from an idea created by the former Education & Research Group and followed up by the Innovation & Education Group. The idea is to form North Sea schools networks, and encourage schools, teachers and pupils around the North Sea to work together on different topics.

This first project is called "Sustainability around the North Sea", and it is funded by so-called Comenius funds (EU fundings).

The project will run from October 2007 to June 2009. The lead school for this project is Saxmundham Middle School in Suffolk. The project will involve pupils in the first years of secondary schooling (11-14 years old)



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Some of the aims:

- To show how sustainability results from people's own life choices
- Each school to survey local climate changes
- To share best practice in the use of School Councils and Eco committees in the design and implementation of environmental action plans

The kick-off seminar was held in Stavanger, Norway, 1. - 4. October 2007.

Project partners:

- Coordinating School: Saxmundham Middle School, Suffolk, England.
- Kannik School, Stavanger, Rogaland, Norway
- Teinå School, Stavanger, Rogaland, Norway
- Nordsee-Gymnasium, Büsum, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
- Donibristle Primary School, Fife, Scotland
- Inverkeithing High School, Fife, Scotland

The IEG will shadow this project. The group adviser as well as members of the NSC family will be welcomed to attend the project meetings which will take place twice a year until the big final conference in Suffolk in June 2009.

- The Passive House Project

The Region of Västra Götaland in Sweden is developing this project, which hopefully will be approved as an Interreg IVB project early in 2008, and thereby partly funded by EU. Hopefully some North Sea Commission regions will be partners in this project, and the NSC will be able to shadow the project.

- The North Sea Screen Partnership

Another proposed INTERREG IVB project, developed by Tayscreen in Scotland.

The idea is amongst other things to

- promote the North Sea region as a film location – virtual North Sea Screen Office, including marketing and branding
- business development opportunities for SMEs in this sector
- training and education development, exchanges and development of best practice and a network of facilities offering access to different methods

The IEG will shadow this project.

IEG Events calendar

Date	Event
14 th - 15 th November 2007	Innovation & Education Group meeting in Lille, France.
1 st February 2008	I&E Strategic Group meets in Brussels
30 th March – 1 st April 2008	IEG meeting in Ålborg, Denmark
28 th – 29 th May 2008	North Sea Schools Network meeting in Busum, Germany
11 th – 13 th June 2008	Joint NSC - Interreg conference in Viborg, Denmark, + NSC GA
30 th September – 1 st October 2008	North Sea Schools Network meeting in Fife, Scotland
1 st – 3 rd October 2008	CPMR General Assembly in Aquitaine, France
First week of June 2009	North Sea Schools Network: Final conference in Suffolk, England