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Minutes of the 41st Executive Committee Meeting on 02 March 2006,
Endeavour House, Ipswich, Suffolk, England

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NSC Executive Committee Participants:

President	Cllr. Gunn Marit Helgesen (Telemark)
Vice President	Cllr. Peter Byman (SNN)
Danish Representative	Cllr. Harry Jensen (Ringkjøbing)
Dutch Representative	Cllr. Rinske Kruisinga (Noord Holland)
English Representative	Cllr. Kevan Lim (East of England Regional Assembly)
French Representative	not represented
German Representative	not represented
Norwegian Representative	Cllr. Gisle Handeland (Hordaland)
Scottish Representative	Cllr. Kathleen Matheson (Highland)
Swedish Representative	not represented

Executive Secretary Lars Haukvik

NSC Executive Committee Substitute Member:

English Representative Cllr Richard Radcliffe (Norfolk)

NSC Chairs/Vice-chairs of Thematic Groups present

Economic Development	Cllr. Rinske Kruisinga (Noord-Holland), Cllr. Kevan Lim (East of England Regional Assembly)
Education and Research	Cllr. Christian Bach Iversen (Nordjylland)
Environment	Cllr. Alison McInnes (Aberdeenshire) Cllr. Henrik Ringbæk Madsen (Nordjylland)
Fisheries	Cllr. Harry Jensen (Ringkjøbing)

NSC Thematic Group Co-ordinators present:

Culture and Tourism	Geir Sør-Reime (Rogaland)
Economic Development	Erik Lindboe (Rogaland)
Education and Research	Ann Brown (NSC)
Fisheries	Ann Bell (Aberdeenshire)
Transport	Jon Halvard Eide (Vest-Agder)

CPMR:

Jean-Didier Hache, CPMR Secretariat

Observers:

Thomas Spriet (Nor-Pas de Calais)
Simone Melis (Noord Holland)
Jo Middleton (Norfolk)
Paul Kane (Aberdeenshire)
Toine Janssen (SNN)
Gordon Summers (Highland)
Jörgen Niemann (Västra Götaland)
Dominique Robertson (Fife)
Tommy Mostrup (Ringkjøbing)
Susy Lauesen (Nordjylland)



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Apologies:

Vice-President Cllr. Audrey Findlay (Aberdeenshire)
Swedish Representative Cllr. Roland Andersson (Västra Götaland)
German Representative Cllr. Björn Thümler (Niedersachsen)
French Representative Cllr. Martine Filleul (Nor-Pas de Calais)
Chair Culture and Tourism Cllr. Annelie Stark (Västra Götaland)
Chair Fisheries Cllr. Sandy Clunes (Shetland)
Chair Education and Research Cllr. Alec Thomson (Fife)
Vice-Chair Culture and Tourism Cllr. Alan Livingstone (Perth & Kinross)
Vice-Chair Transport Cllr. Tor Ottar Karlsen (Buskerud)
Vice-Chair Fisheries Cllr. Anders Fasth (Västra Götaland)
Cllr. Albrecht Harten (Niedersachsen)
Cllr. Jeannine Marquaille (Nor-Pas de Calais)
Co-ordinator Environment Per Hörberg (Västra Götaland)
Peter Wieland (Niedersachsen)
Assistant Executive Secretary Vibeke Jakobsen

The President started by welcoming everyone.

The Agenda for the meeting was approved.

1. Minutes of the 40th Executive Committee Meeting 27 October 2005, Trollhättan, Västra Götaland, Sweden

Kevan Lim queried Item 7 from the last meeting in relation to a full record of the discussion on membership fees and the CPMR being recorded. The NSC Executive Secretary updated the meeting on the discussion. The CPMR offer of a gradual increase in fees over three years has been maintained. Niedersachsen have also maintained their position and have contacted the secretariat who will formally respond.

Rinske Kruisinga requested information on the involvement of the NSC in drafting the next Objective 3 Programme for the North Sea Region. The President explained that the NSC is not directly involved but that individual members of the NSC are as member state representatives.

Decision:

The minutes were then adopted.

2. Interreg IIIB programme for the North Sea

No one from the programme was available to attend the meeting. For news from the programme please visit their homepage; <http://www.interregnorthsea.org/>

3. NSC Work Plans

Executive Committee Work Plan

In addition to the workplan the President reported on the work on territorial Cooperation, Maritime Policy, and the Northern Dimension.



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Culture and Tourism

In addition to the workplan the Coordinator requested that the President write to all regions encouraging political membership of the groups using a paper drafted by the Culture and Tourism Group. It was agreed that the paper could be discussed under AOB.

He also updated the group on the Food Event to be held in Dundee on 31 August 2006 and encouraged Executive Committee members to consider attending.

Economic Development

In addition to the workplan the Chair of the group described a future virtual meeting of the group being planned with the date still to be agreed. It was suggested that this meeting be recorded as a learning tool for the organisation.

Education and Research

In addition to the workplan the Coordinator described the group's work on social inclusion in employment and education, led by Nord Pas de Calais, demographic change, and monitoring the Lisbon Agenda.

Environment

In addition to the workplan the Chair reported on the forthcoming Environment Group annual conference being held in Leeuwarden in the Netherlands on 5-6 April 2006, 'Energising Regional Economies' (<http://www.ereconference.org/>).

The Chair also requested that the Executive Committee decide whether the NSC wants to continue the work to develop the Clean Ship approach under the leadership of Norway and The Netherlands. The Committee agreed that it did and would listen to proposals from the Environment Group as to how this could be achieved.

In relation to MM06, the North Sea Environment Ministers meeting to be held in Gothenburg in May 2006 it was agreed that the President and the Chairs of the Environment and Fishing Groups should represent the North Sea Commission.

Fisheries

In addition to the workplan the Coordinator reported on possible future work by the group with the Oil and Gas industry.

Transport

The Coordinator of the group reported on the workplan and that their current chair has stepped down.

4. Members update and Finances

- 4.1. Finnmark County Council has resigned from NSC and CPMR.
The Accounts pr. 31.12.05 were discussed.



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Decision:

The accounts were adopted.

- 4.2. The Secretariat has received a request from the East of Scotland European Consortium (ESEC) to consider reducing their membership fee on the basis that some ESEC members (Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Fife) are also individual members of the NSC and members of ESEC.

ESEC has 14 members and their current membership fee, from the NSC accounts' is equivalent to having 5 members, a total sum of 14.762 Euro. If ESEC were supposed to pay for all their members, minus Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Fife, their membership fee would be 32.476 Euro.

Decision:

The application from ESEC was refused.

5. Elections of NSC Office bearers

There were no candidates for Co-ordinator for the Education & Research Group.

Nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Transport Group were received from:

Cllr. Alan Livingstone (Perth & Kinross)
Cllr. Charles King (Highland)
Cllr. Leif Blomqvist (Västra Götaland)

Decision:

Cllr Leif Blomqvist was elected as Chair and Councillor Charles King as Vice Chair

6. Report from the CPMR

The Committee noted the reports from the CPMR which were introduced by Jean Didier Hache and also welcomed the presentation on EU funds which can be accessed at http://www.crpm.org/pub/agenda/73_budget.ppt

7. Reports on Ad-Hoc groups

The Executive Committee noted the reports from the Ad-Hoc groups on Territorial Cooperation and on the Maritime Policy Green Paper. There was a discussion in the group on possible further work in these areas.

Decisions:

It was agreed that the Strategic Committee would discuss any further work at its meeting on 20-21 April 2006 in Aberdeenshire.

Each Thematic Group are asked to respond to the Maritime Policy Green Paper and their response will be the basis for the NSC response. NSC will also give a through the CPMR.



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8. NSC and the Challenges Ahead.

- 8.1 Piet Byman presented some options for consideration in relation to the future structure of the groups. The presentation is enclosed these minutes.

Alison McInnes pointed out that the Strategic Committee have not discussed these proposals and that a more evolutionary approach to developing the internal structure had already been agreed.

Decision:

The Strategic Committee will look at the options, focusing on Alternative 1 and 2 and present proposals to the next Executive Committee in June 2006. This will be completed in consultation with the Thematic Groups.

- 8.2 Finding a permanent structure for the North Sea Cycle Route

Decision:

The Executive Committee agreed that further information was needed to make a decision on this matter.

9. Preparations for the 15th General Assembly 2006

Kathleen Matheson and Gordon Summers described the arrangements currently being made for the event. Arrangements for registration are presently being made.

10. Next meeting

Aviemore, Scotland June 14th from 09.00 to 12.00

11. AOB

- 11.1 Tommy Mostrup gave a presentation on issues in the Skjern River area near Ringkjøbing. The Fisheries Group will take this forward.
- 11.2 The letter drafted by the Culture and Tourism Group was discussed and it was agreed that the President should send this to all members.

The agenda and papers for the meeting is available at
http://www.northsea.org/nsc/executive_committee/0603_ipswich/agenda.html

The presentation of Piet Byman for the options for consideration in relation to the future structure of the groups.

Proposals

1. Present situation (more or less)
2. Two strategic groups + ad-hoc groups
3. Ad-hoc groups only (out of Executive meeting)

Proposal 1

- 3 to 6 thematic groups
 - 3 to 6 co-ordinators are needed
 - Either
 - 3x3=9 Politicians needed
 - 3x6=18
 - Few selected issues/ year
 - Co-operation between groups for:
 - Conferences
 - Projects

Proposal 2

- a) Policy development group (5) + Ad-hoc groups for specific issues (with or without co-ordinator)
 - Do work on all politic oriented issues towards CPMR (and COR)
 - Final conclusions to Executive meeting
- b) Project/ co-operation development group (5)
 - Work on:- INTERREG/ transnational/ cross-border projects
 - Conferences/ seminars
 - Two co-ordinators needed

Proposal 3

- **Groups on ad-hoc basis**
 - Group approved by Executive meeting
 - Co-ordinator paid by region who initiated group (has the problem)
 - Problem Solving oriented approach
 - Final conclusions to Executive meeting
 - Politician region in the chair