



Observatory PASCAL

Place Management, Social Capital and Learning Regions

PURE Regional Visit Report (RVR2)

BUSKERUD, NORWAY

27th – 29th January, 2010

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Preamble

The Consultative Development Group for the second visit was the same as for the first visit, except that Fumi Kitagawa was unable to come. Kate, Steve and Lasse met on the evening of 27th January though unfortunately as there were delays in flights from Östersund for Steve and Kate due to extreme weather conditions, it was not possible to have a pre-meeting with the regional coordinating group. The main meetings and presentations were held in the Papirbredden building on 27th and 28th January.

The CDG extend thanks to the regional coordinating group Amarjit Singh, Sigurd Fjose, Hilde Ballière, (Buskerud County), Ety Nilsen, Ingunn Elvekrok (BUC) and Ingunn Sandaker (BUC/Akershus UC) for generous hospitality, preparation and planning; and to the presenters Kåre Sandvik (Professor and pro-rector BUC), Joakim Stakset, Bård Solvang, Johannes Strømme & Tore Sande (students BUC), Rolf Qvenild (Assistant professor, BUC), Åge Sund (Buskerud County), Bente Bjerknæs (Buskerud County), and Hilde Holm (Papirbredden Innovation).

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1. Purpose of the 2nd Consultative Development Group (CDG) visit

The CDG had the following overall purposes which were explored through a series of meetings and presentations:

- to discover what had been achieved since the PURE project started, and what progress had been achieved in the context of the Action Plan,
- to explore what problems have prevented or delayed progress, and
- to discuss any new aspirations for regional engagement and development, informed by the Mid project Review report.
- The review group were asked to focus particularly on an action plan for following-up the newly adopted R&D strategy. In particular to reflect on the new tourism strategy and the strategy for cultural development, and positive ways to include co-operation between the Buskerud County, the university college and tourism businesses. The outcome of the first round CDG visit in April 2009 is summarised in Regional Visit Report (RVR1) *Powered by Nature*. In that first CDG report we recommended certain

new initiatives be explored jointly by the region and the University College in the following specific areas:

- Making the priority areas in the University College / Region Agreement work in practice.
- Working together in achieving the new University structure whilst internationalising the R&D through collaboration with industry.
- Developing a regional strategic plan for tourism and leisure.

2. Reflections and overview of progress of Buskerud County/ Buskerud University College collaborations

Since the first visit, the Regional Planning Strategy for Buskerud County 2009-2012 has been published. The vision is for Buskerud to be *'sustainable and innovative, in order to facilitate business and demographical development'*.

There is a growing realisation in the region, which is articulated in the Strategy document, that this vision can only be realised by the County through working partnerships with research, development and innovation institutions. Buskerud University College (BUC) is recognised in the document to be a key player. This strategy is therefore an important corner stone for University College /Regional engagements. The PURE project review visit and report has prompted this process to some extent. However, the first visit was largely an information gathering exercise enabling a dialogue to develop and supported by the observations and recommendations which were made in the first Review Report.

The second visit therefore aimed to initiate more informed dialogues which would further support the Buskerud team in working together to address the barriers and unresolved difficulties. It was clear to the CDG that the regional coordinating group worked well together (when it has been possible to do so, given the inevitable time constraints, competing priorities etc) but that there were continued difficulties in involving the most senior management and board level in the critical debates. It is always incredibly hard to change the culture of whole organizations: strategy documents lay the foundation, joint working group meetings can discuss around a table the implications of partnership working, but it is hard to embed this into tangible action and into everyday practice. This is a lengthy process of partnership building which takes time and requires the evolution of mutual trust and respect. The review team witnessed a dialogue which is developing and is moving in the right direction. This was demonstrated by the way that the University College's aspirations were reflected in the whole region's thinking, and it has certainly reflected in some attitude changes. Examples on the ground such as the BUC's Papirbredden building creates a tangible and sound manifestation for things to come.

There is no doubt that there continues to be challenges ahead. The Buskerud team outlined the difficulties that they have experienced to embed the PURE process in the culture of the two organisations (Buskerud County and the Buskerud University College) working individually and working in collaboration. Within the County there has been a change of personnel at the top with John Wallace having left the organisation. There was a general feeling that the organisations are still not yet fully engaged and learning through this collaboration. There is a concern that there is no main leader or champion yet emerging either in the County or the University College. This is caused to some extent by organisational change and distracting debates which are still ongoing, affecting both organisations. Both organisations are subject to policy changes imposed externally through national policies.

The on going process of merger of Buskerud University College and the creation of the Oslofjord Alliance and the second stage of applying for University status is high on the agenda of the senior management of BUC with target dates now of 2012/2013. This is being driven by the national policy push for fewer institutions in Norway. Equally the amalgamation of regions is also being driven by the national policy agenda and is manifested in the Regional Research Fund which covers four counties. The PURE process has been very well received within the Regional Research Funding application although specific funding has not been received.

3. Purpose of the 2nd Consultative Development Group (CDG) visit

One of the casualties of lack of time and capacity for the Buskerud Regional Coordinating Group has been that the data analysis and the benchmarking tools have not yet been used. From the other regions which the Consultative Development Group visited in Jan / Feb 2010 it is clear that they have been very useful tools for self evaluation. Indeed where regions had completed the benchmarking tool they reported that the process of bringing people together around a table was particularly useful. Unsurprisingly, both Värmland and Jämtland struggled to complete them in time too, but reported that it had raised a lot of discussion and was valuable as a tool around which to structure discussions. It was not seen as a tool for inter – regional comparison necessarily but rather for internal evaluation and potentially also for strengthening Regional/University collaboration. At PASCAL level there were issues that have been raised regarding their applicability in the Scandinavian context and there has been identification of some internal inconsistencies which will be dealt with by the PURE team in PASCAL.

The Consultative Development Group would therefore recommend to Buskerud regional coordinating group that the tools are trialled. Guidance on how to advise regions and universities to apply benchmarking procedures and/or how to tackle the data analysis can be sought from within the PURE team. The way to tackle engagement with the tool might be that the Link Partner / Knowledge Broker and a key contact in a university/the county might hold a meeting with a series of key figures in the university/county that represent the seven main areas of the HEI benchmarking tool/ eight areas for the regional benchmarking tool. They might be joined by the Consultative Leader Reviewer (CLR) / Knowledge Manager either in person or more likely by telephone conference. The main purpose of such a meeting would be to break the task into component parts, devolving these to the most relevant person in each area. That person could a) make contact with others in the sub-area and b) report back to the key contact. In the case of Buskerud County and the BUC the key contact should ideally be the Buskerud County Director of Regional Development and the Rector of BUC, so that the organisations are persuaded of the importance of engaging with the process. This was the case in Karlstad University, Värmland where the Rector chaired the meeting and so created just the right buzz and flurry of activity.

The CDG recommend that Buskerud consider this course of action and make contact with the PURE administration to discuss the additional support which would be helpful for implementation.

4. CDG Reflections on the Regional R&D Strategy Implementation 2010-2015

Buskerud will be leading within Norway in the fields of knowledge development and innovation, development of businesses and services with the purpose of creating high value adding. The Vision 2010-2015.

Regional R & D Strategy

This is the area where the CDG found there has been great progress and the process of developing the strategy was explained by Åge Sund of Buskerud County. The regional foresight approach used has resulted in a robust strategy and shared base for priorities and efforts within R&D and innovation in the county. Success and political buy-in can be seen to be the consequence of the collaborative nature of the regional partnership strategy development process used. The significant input from the business sector was noted with 50% of the contribution from the business sector. There is now a strong political platform for developing the Action Plan with the key players and with commitment from the business and industry sector. The key areas for activity are well focussed on the identified areas of strength and opportunity: Tourism and creative industries, Systems engineering, Health and care services and Environment & green energy technologies. This is consistent with the strap line for Buskerud – *Powered by Nature*. The strategy importantly also majors on the means and measures of success with the identification of funding and resource availability - again providing a sound basis for planning the implementation. This is truly a regional plan where the County is the driver and brings together the key



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players and gains commitment of stakeholders including the central players of BUC, Innovation Norway and the business sector. The County provides the 'glue' to ensure that partners are coordinated and share a common mission. It provides the essential strategic priorities with which to develop applications and proposals through the Regional Development Fund (though this is spread across four counties and is limited to 37 M NOK). The strategy also sets the ground work for further investment partnerships to develop with BUC, Innovation Norway and the Business sectors.

The CDG heard about three of the priority areas: Tourism/creative industries, Health Care products and services, and Systems Engineering/environment and energy.

CDG Reflections

The Action Plan presents the current challenge for the coming years. The 2010 plan is mainly based on existing programmes and processes thus the major challenge is to seek the funding to embark on the more ambitious projects. The lead from the Buskerud County is strong and includes the all important political buy in. The County has the advantage of being able to build on the positive experiences from earlier Strategy development process and so establish networks and arenas through a continuing strategic dialogue. The CDG commented on the challenge in keeping the momentum going particularly in the current difficult economic climate. However, it would seem to be just the right time to energise the regional partnership with the BUC. The CDG had been very encouraged to hear the pro-rector's approach to creating a University with strong R&D oriented activities both at regional and national / international levels. This will lead to success in strengthening innovation and R&D activities with industry based clusters based on the triple helix model. The challenge appears to be keeping the business sector engaged in the process and so operationizing the objectives.

5. CDG reflections on Buskerud County/ Buskerud University College collaborations in the priority areas:

Tourism and Creative industries

Bente Bjerknæs, Buskerud County gave a presentation on the emerging Tourism Strategy and Action Plan.

The PURE Action Plan reports on the work in Innovative Mountain tourism which continues with BUC as a partner, and that there are several partnership projects on tourism planned for 2010. Unlike the first visit the CDG did not hear as much about the actual on-going tourism projects since the focus was principally on the new Tourism Strategy. The key to success in tourism is to find the competitive edge which in the case of Buskerud must lie in the natural and cultural heritage and the stunning scenery whilst being close to Oslo. Innovation in tourism will benefit from engagement with Visit Norway and the CDG shared experience of valuable information sharing initiatives in Scotland. Here good market intelligence is seen as a key driver of innovation and enterprise. To support the industry in this area, a new joint initiative has been developed by Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Visit Scotland called Tourism Intelligence : <http://www.tourism-intelligence.co.uk> . Moreover, a Tourism Innovation Group (TiG) was set up in 2002. This is a private-sector led group, which aims to stimulate tourism operators into taking action to add to the quality, scope and success of tourism businesses, improving Scotland's competitiveness in tourism markets. <http://www.tourisminnovation.com> These initiatives are worthy of investigating as there are clearly parallel needs in Buskerud.

What is the role for the University College? Overall the focus of the tourism sector in Buskerud is to stimulate economic growth and sustainability in the sector. Thus the challenge is to develop well-targeted courses in the University to develop entrepreneurship and business innovation in areas such as marketing, business development and ICT. The CDG was pleased to have the opportunity to meet a group of students on the Visual Communication Studies programme. Their studies included 'real' projects

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offering work experience to develop their skills in design, project development and implementation for a client. The students were attracted to the course for this reason and reported that it was giving them the skills for business development within the creative industry. This kind of student experience helps to build links with local businesses and brings innovation and new ideas into the industry and highlights the opportunities available for young people to contribute to the economic development of the area.

The strategic focus must be on sustainability from an ecological, economic and community angle. Of course good sustainable tourism business developments will deliver benefits in all three areas. The CDG was impressed with the process which had been employed in producing the Tourism Strategy to date. Again the consultation process has been led by the County with three staff members including Innovation Norway and a consultant. There was a Plan Steering Board with 12 members and BUC has played a pivotal role, with other key partners being the municipalities, businesses, transport companies and agencies such as Innovation Norway and Visit Norway. A comprehensive programme of scenario planning, open meetings, conferences and consultation had taken place with the final stages of completion yet to be done at the time of the visit. Publication is expected to be April 2010.

A key issue highlighted to the CDG was that of improving the image of tourism and the quality of employment opportunities. Here the BUC can have a role to play, together with the tourism businesses, in creating tourism as a knowledge based sector. But the CDG advised that it is vital to consider the overall capability of people from the youngest to the oldest. So this will require links with primary and secondary schools and with people of all backgrounds in the communities. The strategy focus here is *people* and in building the human capital or human capability through developing a deep understanding and ownership of the natural and cultural assets of the County, to create the 'stories' about the special qualities of the County and so bring a sense of pride of place in Buskerud. The CDG highlighted the missing 'people' component of the Tourism Strategy. This is a long-term strategic investment with an ultimate objective being to create an innovative and entrepreneurial Buskerud and so encourage new kinds of tourism for example food tourism, wildlife tourism, activity tourism etc.

Where will the leadership for this challenging joined – up vision come from? It is important to think more about people than about structures. Structures are important, but it is people who operate those structures. People are at the centre of tourism businesses as both hosts, employees and contractors. In order therefore for tourism to be driven forward the CDG emphasized the importance of supporting the people who do it and so grow their capabilities. This is the lifelong learning and adult education agenda. Moreover it is interesting to be inclusive when considering the many other professions which contribute to the tourism sector, for example in knowledge transfer – historians, cultural scientists, biologists, lawyers, architects, artists, artisans etc. There is real need for a people strategy that would address this and other inclusion issues for example Drammen has a large ethnic population (17%) and although not confirmed many of these would be expected to be working in the food and hospitality businesses.

The CDG discussed the strategic merit of setting up an Institute of Tourism bringing together innovation and R&D in destination development, product and concept development, marketing, transport and infrastructure all in the context of sustainable development. There was clearly enthusiasm from the BUC where there is already a base to build on in the area of tourism. The Bachelor of Tourism in Hønefoss is a programme within Business Studies. But there is a need to develop more courses particularly short professional courses, which link with workplace learning. It was noted that there are existing collaborations with other colleges such as Lillehammer and Stavanger which offer wider expertise in the field. The CDG warned of the difficulties of setting up an Institute principally because of the need to make it self financing and the potential danger of mission creep as one has to follow the projects for which there is funding. The most successful Institutes are those which are based on and in the industry itself. It would also appear that the European Commission is less likely to fund the building of new structures rather it is more focused on action projects.

There was further discussion about the value of strengthening networks or arenas possibly based on the Steering Board membership which had collaborated in the development of the Tourism Strategy. This might result in an industry innovation cluster approach with thematic working groups. The PURE cluster groupings may also assist with this.

Health Care - better health, better life, staying at home.

The CDG heard a stimulating presentation by Hilde Holm, project manager at Papirbredden Innovation. The main issues which the County and Drammen Municipality face were well described. The picture is one of a service which operates over a large geographical area with the main specialist primary care hospital in Drammen with R&D and innovation focused on 'high profile' diseases such as cancer - based in the hospital and Buskerud University College. There is also a hospital in Kongsberg and a smaller one in Hønefoss with good research. There is also a small research centre in the mountains. In Bærum (the neighbouring Asker region) is a large hospital which is also involved in cooperation with Drammen.

However, the population is an aging one with health care structures moving toward greater emphasis on preventative care and community-based care services with *better health, better life, staying at home* being the strap line. There is therefore a growing need to focus R&D and innovation on health care, well being and lifestyle as well as preventative medicine and coping with chronic diseases of old age.

The challenge presented was how to develop a county - wide structure for innovation in the health care industry. This needs to address the issues of attracting high quality research in health care (Research in cancer and drug research is currently much better funded and carries greater professional credibility). Research and innovation should capitalize on the opportunities for spin out businesses in the field of health care and care in the home especially linked to technology. Related to this is the need to increase recruitment to the sector and improve the competences of health workers. Clearly a role for University / county / municipality collaboration.

A model was put forward for a Science Centre with a sector cluster approach. This Science Centre would provide the link between cutting edge health science care, R&D and training in community health services and primary care and specialized provision. This model would be 'cradle to grave' in its outreach - introducing children in primary and secondary schools to health issues and well being from an early age. The University College would thus attract students to study and they would be well prepared. The focus in the community is on consumer-orientated innovation - living a healthy lifestyle, diet, exercise, with the support of new technologies to organize the home. This is becoming a real imperative as the ability for the welfare state to fund health care is being stretched.

At present there is a clear need to re-structure and re-prioritise the hospital provision - there is some willingness observed following recognition as an ARENA project in the Norwegian cluster project and this has been aided by the Drammen R&D strategy which highlights the need for Health and Ageing developments. The challenge which was presented to the CDG was how to really make Buskerud exemplary in its health care provision by 2017.

The CDG commented that this is a huge project and will take time to implement and engage with the big stakeholders. One way to mobilize the region might be to declare the status of Drammen/Buskerud City/County of *Healthy Living*. This is an internationally recognized way to raise the profile and is a typical approach eg: City of Culture, Learning City. It may be interesting to look at the example in Newcastle where the city declared itself Newcastle *Science City* <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/nubs/business/pops.htm> . First and foremost it will be critical to have Buskerud University College, the County and the municipalities signed up to the vision. For municipalities there is much to be gained by their involvement and at community level there are opportunities for local projects for example, Healthy eating, Local food production. Local healthy eating cooking courses. For the BUC the systems engineering speciality is a clear strength for the development of physical technological support devices. However the BUC will only

participate if there is commitment and leadership from the rector. As always, inspirational leadership is absolutely key. The vision has good backing from the business community as the CDG understands, and this is also very important. One possible powerful tool to bring business and the R&D elements together is to fund a professorship at the BUC / new University. The CDG again stressed that this is a major project in terms of funding that is being discussed.

The CDG advised that it would be wise to tie this vision into the well crafted strategies which are in place in Buskerud. The CDG also recommended taking a look at the vision from the perspective of people rather than structures and technologies. There is a major component which is focused on people and lifelong learning. Through this approach it will be possible to see where the different stakeholders have a role to play for instance the municipalities – community education, local clinics/health centres, schools etc; the BUC – R&D, teaching, training, outreach etc.; the hospital – health care practice, nursing staff, etc. CDG recognized that Health is to be devolved to the Region in Feb 2010 therefore there is a clear window of opportunity and this ambitious approach is only now possible to plan for.

The CDG recommended that a concept paper should be written and presented to the key stakeholders so that the process can begin.

In the meantime and in parallel, Hilde outlined a Plan B which is to set up a small regional innovation system (arena/ platform) within Innovation Papirbredden with researchers from hospitals through Medicare Nova. Businesses and companies would pay for the research and the Innovation centre would act as a broker.

The CDG heard that all centers of expertise have been developed by ARENA therefore this would be the likely route for this approach.

The CDG was not able to provide any detailed response to these two approaches but believed that the Plan B Innovation platform was a sound starting point. The CDG wish Hilde every success in the endeavors. Further support may be available through the PURE cluster Regional Innovation and Renewal.

6. Reflections on the planned Oslofjord alliance and BUC's university ambitions in a regional context

Kåre Sandvik, Pro-Rector gave a presentation.

It is encouraging that plans for the merger of the Colleges and the new University status has progressed considerably since the first visit of the CDG. It is very clear that although the County has not yet backed the proposals the underpinning principles are sound, though the proposed structure and hence the route map for achievement is very complex. It is true that the call for graduate education is increasing and businesses and the public sector demand programmes which prepare young people for employment, develop creativity, entrepreneurship and capability. Internally there is an appetite for developing PhD programmes with some key areas ready for the move - particularly Systems Engineering in Kongsberg. Add this to the national push for fewer institutions and the growing competition for resources and research funding then the move makes sense.

The challenge for BUC is to execute the merger on BUC's terms through exercising strong leadership in the negotiations with the other 2 Colleges and the University of Agricultural Sciences. This would appear to be the strategy as described by Kåre Sandvik the Pro-rector. However there are some major infra-structural challenges which still require attention. The extent of the area covered by the new University would be large stretching from Hønefoss in the north to Halden in the south, so potentially there could be 9 or 10 campuses. There are benefits of working together which are clear, but the extensive nature of the geography raises particular practical challenges. The mode of teaching will need to involve more distance and blended learning opportunities perhaps on an 'Open University' model. Some examination of the new

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University of the Highlands and Islands in Scotland might be valuable. The BUC is now clear about why this Oslofjord Alliance is important though there is still some way to go before the County is brought on board. There is also a clear need to identify and communicate the focus for the new University nationally such that these centres of expertise will attract the six professors needed to support the four PhD programmes required for University status. The new University will make for more success in attracting staff with high competences, as well as fitting with the national funding for mergers. Oslofjord Alliance is one of seven such processes on-going in Norway so it is important to be well ahead in strategic thinking.

Given the types of specialisms which exist within the existing institutions the focus has been described to the Review Group as Regional Development and Applied Science. There are several very strong arguments for why the CDG would support the focus of Regional Development and which should be used to promote the concept to the County. There is an urgent need to articulate the HiBu's ambitions for the University in a regional context:

- BUC has been working with the County addressing the key regional strategic issues and this is well founded in the Regional Planning Strategy for Buskerud County 2009-2012.
- The new University will include expertise in this area and the geographical spread of outreach and impact for the University for rural businesses and tourism will provide a research and innovation 'laboratory' from Oslo to the mountains of the Hardanger mountain plateau.
- The culture and nature of teaching in the University College as demonstrated by the student presentation recognises the importance of getting 'in and about' businesses and encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation. This is just the kind of experience which students need to have in order to see the opportunities for employment in the Region.
- The Kongsberg cluster is strong and built on very successful multi-national corporations within the Scandinavian model of devolved decision making. This is ideal for seeking to strengthen common competencies in order to find new directions. It fits well with the regional and international aspirations of a University. At the heart of success will be how information is shared and to what outcome. New industries must emerge and they must be lean, green, and at the cutting edge of new technology. Professor Rolf Qvenild, assistant professor, BUC at Kongsberg gave a very persuasive presentation bringing his extensive background in the industry to the table.
- There is no university in Norway which is characterised by a focus on regional development apart from Vestfold, which is very small. It is perhaps worth reflecting on the situation in Jämtland, Sweden where the County has established the Jämtland Institute for Rural Development. This has growing links with Mid Sweden University and has a variety of regional focussed R&D projects with academic staff and PhD students.
- There is a growing interest at the nexus of tourism-culture-creativity and BUC has already projects which have had an impact in this arena through the Regional Research Funding. These has been described by Ingunn Elvedrok particularly in the first review visit and would appear to have had a positive impact on the rural business community in the area of food tourism for example.

The CDG emphasised the importance of specialising in specific areas in order to be competitive. Equally it is important to identify where the competition is and plan to offer different programmes and/or to look to collaborate, which ever is a better tactic eg with University of Trondheim, or Bergen Business College.

The CDG had a word of warning about University status. There can be a danger that a University can set itself up as an island isolated from the rest of the city looking only to international relations and research without a commitment to the region. Hopefully this will not happen here as the history is one of collaboration with business and industry and now a good working partnership with the County and regional development. Moreover, the university will not be able to compete with the 'old' established elite Universities so to be the very best regional university should be a good target and with the internationalisation in Kongsberg providing a window to world. The CDG picked up the concerns that there are regarding operationalising the merger.

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Academics are not all behind the changes and the practicalities have not yet been detailed. Making the connections with some of the big global issues has yet to be built on, for example climate change and sustainability as a key theme running through. There are such strong connections with health, well being, clean green energy, tourism and culture so that the University is very well placed to be at the forefront of 'green jobs'.

Overall, the CDG was sensitive to the worries about the lack of institutional and regional leadership and appreciate that the regional co-ordinating group need to find for the best ways to promote the whole idea to the County Administration Board.

7. Identification of Priority Areas and Potential for Clusters

During the visit the CDG heard about the developments which had occurred and were certainly encouraged by the positive progress. The perception of the CDG is that the university college is more responsive to the kinds of initiatives that the region have in mind than 10 months ago. Kåre has played a key role and will be critical to bringing the whole University College with him, including and firmly backed by, the rector. The Oslofjord Alliance requires support from the other institutions also - so this is a major challenge. And then there is the County Administration backing and engagement. So the CDG identifies this as a priority area of strategic importance. Now that the local coordinating group have evolved a good working relationship they should continue to meet and strengthen the partnership. The Action Plan for the Regional Strategic Plan is the focus and this must reflect the aspirations of the County and BUC. Thus a dialogue with management is imperative and the CDG hopes that the PURE process will have helped to engage the regional leaders.

The second area of focus is the operationalising of the Action Plan and the links made with R&D and innovation in Tourism, Health Care and green technology – all areas of high priority in the Action Plan and ones that marry well with the growing expertise and expectations for the new University. The developments at University of Newcastle, UK are interesting and worthy of consideration. Here four 'Professors of Practice' have been appointed (funded by the University and the region). <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/nubs/business/pops.htm> A similar proposal is going ahead in Värmland with Karlstad University.

Underlying these concerns are some fundamental issues for the region which focus on the rurality of much of Buskerud and of the inequalities between Drammen/ Konsberg and the mountainous area of the north and west. Buskerud is a place with an aging population and lower than average education and training experience. High quality and innovative tourism and cultural activities may offer some solutions to rural depopulation, low paid and low status jobs. The PURE international cluster development can support the region through dialogue with other regions and in particular the cluster with the theme Sustaining Rural and Remote Communities. This will perhaps help to continue the debate which the CDG had during the visit to Buskerud. To date the clusters have not been as active as hoped and there is a need for the PURE to reassess the working pattern in order to establish a dialogue between the regions. The PASCAL/ PURE conference in Östersund will be a valuable platform for PURE regions for these strategic discussions.

Use of the benchmarking tools should be considered and a process to build mutual understandings and hone the overall mission of University engagement with the Region.

The CDG again stressed the importance of developing a Human Capital or Capability Strategy.

8. Summary Observations and Conclusions

The CDG realize that things have developed slower than might have been imagined at the beginning of the PURE project. However this is to be expected given the changes which are taking place within the



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institutions. In particular the merger and University developments are inevitably taking a significant amount of time and energy. The CDG advised that the root of the issue will be to find ways to challenge the culture within the academic world of the University College. Traditionally academics are encouraged to focus first and foremost on their own research and teaching, secondly on their department and faculty and only finally on matters of University-wide significance. This is natural given the funding structures which support individuals and their research work. Moreover, traditionally the focus of the University-wide mission is firstly Research (international), then Teaching and only thirdly the so called Third Mission – outreach to the region and contribution to the community. The leaders in the new Oslofjord Alliance will need to inspire and guide the staff through this period and we believe that working in partnership with the County/Region is clearly of potential mutual benefit and synergy. Given the substantial amount of strategic collaboration and networking already achieved there is tremendous opportunity for engagement with the key regional issues. A high level Innovation Board bringing the key stakeholders together may be advantageous in this respect. The County should also show solidarity and consider potential investments (with strings) in the new University and this should in turn support the bid for University status at national level.

The CDG wishes Buskerud all strength for the future to take this challenging agenda ahead.