

Moray Economic Strategy (MES) Quarterly Update from Programme Groups July – September 2017

Board and Media

Hosted by [Walkers Shortbread Ltd](#) the Moray Economic Partnership (MEP) board held its quarterly meeting on 21 September. The board:

- Received a media report and communications plan update from [Muckle Media](#) the media services provider for MEP
- Received an update regarding the Regional Growth Deal Bid
- Received an update regarding Community Planning governance and the Moray [Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#) (LOIP)
- Considered the continued use of performance targets derived from the Moray 2026 Plan
- Considered a report prepared by Ekos regarding the Moray Skills Investment Plan identifying skills gaps and recommending actions to address these
- Received a programme report from the Development & Inward Investment Group; and
- Received partner updates. (see meeting minute for details)

Public Relation Activities this quarter

Campaigns and Initiatives

- Moray Growth Deal Bid – My Moray site established (over 1,200 unique visits & 20 business pledges supporting campaign). Engagements, Keith Show, Speyfest, Elgin BID Food & Drink Fest, Moray College. Social media engagement
- [Ambassador videos](#) for Moray Speyside Tourism

Future Stories

- Moray Business Week (November 8-15)
- Moray Speyside Tourism conference
- Reinforcing links with RAF/39 Engineers
- WorldHost
- Buckie harbour
- Moray Christmas Campaign
- Apprenticeship 2018
- Moray Growth Deal
- Northern Scot columns

Media Coverage this quarter

- Business Loans Scotland
- Scotland's Most Beautiful High Street
- Doors Open Day
- Growth Deal

Promoting Moray as a place to live work and invest see [My Moray](#) & [My Moray Facebook Page](#)

For more information on MEP go to [MEP meeting agendas and minutes](#) also [MEP Facebook Page](#)

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Tourism and Culture

Arts & Culture sub group

A successful recruitment process has resulted in the Moray Place Partnership appointing Sandra Morrison as the Place Partnership Co-ordinator, who started in post on 12 September. Sandra has worked in heritage education for over 23 years, creating, developing and delivering many creative and cultural projects. She is currently studying for a BA in Professional Development at the University of Aberdeen and supports events and fundraising activities as Senior Vice President at the Rotary Club of Huntly.

The Stage 2 Heritage Lottery Fund Great Place Scheme Application was submitted by Moray Council on behalf of the Great Place Project Group on 25 September. HIE has confirmed a £20,000 contribution towards the project. Further match funding will be sought from Moray LEADER, with an application being considered at the December Moray LEADER LAG meeting.

On behalf of Creative Scotland, Pidgin Perfect will be hosting a Placemaking Breakfast at Moray College on 25 October. The event will facilitate a practical discussion about what placemaking really means and the importance of culture in building the places we value most across Scotland.

Tourism

Moray Speyside's visitor numbers for the full year 2016 indicate an £11m increase in economic impact, a significant rise in visitors and an increase in FTE's sustained.

- Total visitors to Moray Speyside have risen to 750,410 up by 6.8%
- Visitor days have risen to 1,799,430 from 1,751,580 up by 2.7%
- The amount of revenue generated by tourism activities has risen from to £117.64m in 2016 – up by 11.2%
- The number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employed in the region's tourism industry has grown to 2,769 up by 9.6% on 2015.

MST, along with colleagues from neighbouring DMO's Cairngorm Business Partnership and Visit Inverness Loch Ness were invited to attend the VisitScotland board meeting in Inverness last week. The purpose of the engagement was to discuss the strong collaboration between the three DMO's and to examine opportunities for further partnership. The board meeting was followed by a stakeholder dinner with the board and tourism businesses.

MST was invited to dine with the Japanese Ambassador and Tourism Minister at the Station Hotel, Rothes. As a direct outcome of the conversations at dinner, it is looking likely that an Ambassador / Tourism minister-led delegation of key tour operators will take place in May 2018.

MST is supporting The Moray Council by developing an itinerary for a potential Chinese familiarisation visit later in the year.

The past weeks have seen Moray Speyside's golf courses feature in a number of publications and outlets as a result of activity / investments made by MST. An example as follows (Pages 73/4/5)

<http://www.worldwidegolfme.com/magazine/sep17>

MST has submitted an application to Visit Scotland for Growth Fund. If successful, this year's campaign will capitalise on our success at Expo focusing on marketing the region to the travel trade. Growth Fund requires matched funding. MST is seeking up to £20k to match Visit Scotland's investment in the campaign. If matched funding is not sourced, the project will not go ahead.

MST have been working in partnership with VisitScotland to put together an improved syllabus and access to better support material for students undertaking National 4 & 5 Travel & Tourism qualifications. MST has created a series of short videos featuring people who work in tourism in Moray Speyside. The videos and supporting info will be officially launched / released in the next 2 weeks with accompanying PR. See our vimeo for a preview <https://vimeo.com/morayspeyside>

MST KEY ACTIVITIES IN NEXT PERIOD

- **MST CONFERENCE**

The date for this year's MST Conference is 8th Nov – the event will take place at the Alexander Graham Bell Centre at Moray College UHI. MST have a range of speakers confirmed including representatives from Trip Advisor's head of destinations, Cairngorm National Park's head of visitor services and the chief exec of Scotland's Towns Partnership. Moray Councillors are invited to attend the event for free if they bring a tourism business from their ward.

- **UKINBOUND DESTINATION WORKSHOP** – MST are working in partnership with UK Inbound, the UK's trade association for inbound travel operators to host a 'Discovery Workshop' in November. The event will bring 25 tour operators from across the UK and beyond to Elgin for a series of events and activities which include 1-2-1 meetings with Moray Speyside suppliers. This will be the first time ever that an event of this type has taken place in Moray.

- **VISITSCOTLAND EXPO**

Planning for VisitScotland Expo 2018 has begun in earnest. MST have booked 12 stands at the event on 11/12 April 2018 and are currently working to bring on commercial partners. Confirmed so far are Johnstons of Elgin, Ballindalloch Estate, Station Hotel, Malt Whisky Trail, Ace Adventures. We have strong interest from a number of other major brands. MST intend to significantly increase the 'Taste of Moray' food and drink aspect and will be

seeking sector-specific sponsorship to support this activity.

- **MORAY SPEYSIDE WEBSITE**

Development and launch of new MST website which will enable the generate income and provide the functionality for both visitors and trade contacts is now a major priority. To this end MST will be seeking tenders for a new MST site in the next few weeks.

- **MST FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY**

MST has been awarded funding from the Scottish Government to research the feasibility and appetite for (or against) of a Moray-wide Tourism Business Improvement District (T-BID). A further update will be provided at the meeting.

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Skills Investment

The Skills Investment Group are now feeding into COHIE each quarter to strengthen communication links and continues to meet with the Programme Managers from the MEP groups.

Moray Growth Deal

Consultation took place with Moray College UHI students to support the Moray Growth Deal development and initial discussion with the Scottish Future Trust indicated that there was further work to be done in developing more innovative projects and it is expected not that the overall bid will to be ready of submission for 2017 deadline.

Skills Investment Plan refresh

Ekos have completed their work and presented their findings on the 8th September. The final evaluation once approved will influence the action plan for the Skills Group.

Events

Moray Jobs and You took place on the 7th September in the AGB Centre. The overall event was very busy and employers who attended were very positive. 25 employers attended most of them had vacancies.

Employer Engagement

Flexible Workforce Development Fund – this was launched on the 7th September and provides a fund of up to 10K for employers who are paying the new apprenticeship levy. The money can be used for a range of training linked to an identified skills gap within each individual organisation. Training has to be delivered by colleges as the funding is provided through the Scottish Funding Council. There is no definitive list of employers in Moray who have to pay the levy. Moray College UHI have contacted the employers who they think are most likely to be paying the levy. Deadline for submissions is mid December.

Employer Investment

MacDuff Shipyards will be carrying out a refurb of Buckie Shipyard and are working with HIE.

AJ Engineering expect to be taking on 17 – 20 additional staff over the next 2 years mainly school leavers. They have taken on their first Graduate Level Apprentice.

A new tenant has moved into the **Alexander Graham Bell Centre** wef 7th August. Alceli have funding for up to 12 months initially to undertake research into the development of a new machine for the treatment of cancer using proton therapy. The company, started by Director Steve Hunt, who has a background in Engineering and has worked in many countries including Switzerland and Thailand moved into the Centre in Elgin in early August have ambitions to not only design and test a new prototype but also enter the field of manufacture. The current staff team in Elgin consists of 7 employees and 1 executive Director including 1 young apprentice. Their plan is to employ a number of young people as apprentices and the company are committed to investing in young people as they grow. Their aim is to build the staff team up to 50.

Apprenticeships

The group continues to monitor the developments within the apprenticeship programmes including the foundation and graduate level apprenticeship as well as the existing MA programme. As at the end of September 24 young people were on the Foundation Apprenticeship programme with Moray College UHI. Moray College UHI will be bidding for a further 2 frameworks for 2018 – 2020 which means that 7 frameworks will be offered to schools in Moray [subject to approval]. These include: Accountancy and Food and Drink operations [to be approved], Creative and Digital Media, Scientific Technologies, Childcare, Health and Social Care and Business Skills.

Graduate Level Apprenticeships – UHI have applied to run 2 IT GLA's and are awaiting the outcome of their bid to SDS.

Training

Personal Track Safety July

All delegates who took part in the Personal Track Safety course which was run in July though Moray College UHI in partnership with SWGR have been employed. A second course will be running in October/November.

Construction courses June and August 2017

These 2 week courses are run by Moray College UHI in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions and provides delegates with a number of qualifications including the CSCS card which is required to work on any construction sites. Currently there is significant demand for construction jobs in Moray.

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Development and Inward Investment Group

- **Barmuckity Business Park**

Planning application has been submitted for 2 self storage warehouses and associated reception/office for S & D Harper at the rear of Phase 1 as set out in the Masterplan Framework approved at P & RS Committee on 16 November 2016. Work has now started on site and the ground works are underway. It is expected that the infrastructure works will be completed for the first phase in mid- 2018. EBP Ltd has indicated that they are dealing with a number of enquiries for land.

- **Elgin South Masterplan/Moray Sports Centre**

The major planning application for 870 houses, 2 school sites and the Moray Sports Centre at Elgin South is pending subject to the S.75 legal agreement being signed. A planning application has been submitted for Linkwood Primary school in accordance with the masterplan and planning application.

- **Other Major Planning Proposals (PANS) & Applications**

Major planning applications pending consideration at Malclomburn warehousing, Findrassie (mixed use development).

Two Proposal of Application Notices have been received for the major development and associated infrastructure at R3, Ferrylea/Forres LONG3 as well as a New Extraction Area at Caysbrigg Quarry, Lossiemouth. These were presented to the Planning & Regulatory Services Committee in August 2017.

A major planning application for a Solar PV farm at Speyslaw (largest in Scotland) was approved in August 2017.

- **Forres Enterprise Park**

HIE are currently dealing with a large inward investment enquiry for the remaining vacant unit on the park. This enquiry is in the early stages, and is looking at several other sites in Scotland and abroad.

Three new companies have taken space in Horizon Scotland over the last couple of months, Leximo, Scot Connect Ltd and Radar Video.

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Transportation

- **A96 Dualling**

Transport Scotland (TS) awarded the contract for stage 2 (detail options for route development of the dualling of the A96) in June /July 2016. TS and consultants have carried out a review of the strategic route options and presented a number of more detailed route options in during the Summer of 2017. This will be narrowed down to a preferred option in the Summer of 2018

- **Buckie Harbour**

Final Investment decision has been made on the Beatrice Offshore Wind Ltd (BOWL) project and Buckie has been asked to provide a contingency support facility for the BOWL development. Council Officers are currently in negotiation with Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) with a view to lease property to support contingency arrangements.

The Contract for Difference (CfD) round 2 has been announced with MOWEL formally MORL getting CfD for 950MW windfarm. The Council has now engaged with MOWEL to secure the services of Buckie Harbour to support the MOWEL windfarm.

The Council has sold the Buckie shipyard to MacDuff Shipbuilding Ltd who is currently developing the site to expand their business in Buckie.

The Council is looking to secure Buckie as a base for support vessels to carryout Plug and Abandonment of wells in the Moray Firth prior to decommissioning of these platforms.

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