

Moray Economic Partnership

Teams Meeting

Wednesday 24 June 2020 14:00

Graham Leadbitter (Chair)	Leader, Moray Council
Rhona Gunn	Moray Council
Sarah Medcraf	Chamber of Commerce
Katherine Mackintosh	Robertson
Laurie Piper	Moray Speyside Tourism
Andrew Anderson	tsiMoray
David Patterson	Moray UHI
Michael O'Donnell	Moray Council
Stuart Black	HIE
Rona Campbell	HIE
Pearl Hamilton	FSB
Ewen McKintosh	Gordon & MacPhail
Jim Grant	Moray Council
John Cowe	Councillor, Moray Council
Tim Eagle	Councillor, Moray Council
Kerry Williams (minutes)	HIE

Apologies

Dr Jamie Hogg	NHS Grampian
Stephen Sheridan	SDS

	GL welcomed two new members to the MEP – Cllr Cowe and Cllr Eagle. Introductions took place and round table update ensued.	
1.	Round table update The whisky industry reporting good and bad points during the Covid crisis with conflicting guidance between UKG and SG making it a challenge. Clarity is required to know what is safe and compliant on best working practise. The HR network are sharing knowledge and information exchange on engaging with staff and welcoming them back to work. H&S audits are being carried out to enable getting back to work safely. RC has been involved in the Growth Deal animation and ready to roll out engagement. HIE have effectively been supporting businesses with distributing government funding schemes over the past 6 weeks, arranging appeals and helping with any financial issues through any other support. Feedback on grant support to	

	<p>be given to ministers. Working hard to develop the Growth Deal MIM and MAATIC projects and looking forward to the future.</p> <p>TsiMoray have local community development officers working hard to distribute allocated funding at ground level. They have increased communications, support and advice and are developing a new web portal. Collaborating with the Grampian Assistance Hub to communicate effectively.</p> <p>Moray College UHI have been closed for past 3 months with only 25% staff furloughed. Usual funding has been maintained by Govt as normal but additional income streams have stalled. Most teaching staff will be on summer leave at the end of June. Awaiting guidance to be able to open additional campus buildings. Most planning has been taken over by recent events. Concentrating mostly on supporting students back to employment and re-skilling with a big marketing drive over the summer months. Growth Deal projects are still going ahead.</p> <p>Construction industry now allowed to get back on sites and furloughed staff are back to work. Although, there are some concerns on productivity with pipeline and existing projects having dried up due to lack of capital funding. Industry is likely to be restructuring in the wake of the crisis.</p> <p>Moray Chamber of Commerce continue to support local businesses with only 1 member of staff. They have expressed that clarity is required for small to medium sized businesses on how to open up safely and cost effectively to ensure their businesses are Covid secure and staff are safe. Employees are positive about return to work, although in many cases, consultations are ongoing with regards to redundancies. They are in national talks with ministers to prioritise help for those affected now, then in the medium to long term. A recent survey carried out by MCC indicated there is a 52/48 split by population with majority happy to welcome back tourists.</p> <p>With recent announcement that nurseries are due to open, LA childcare is not such an issue now, although it is still unclear about the operations for privately owned nurseries.</p> <p>FSB continue helping members access everything they need and hosting webinars for their members with representatives from SG. They have been involved in the consultation processes, especially with parking restrictions, to allow cafes and pubs to open out onto the streets to capitalise on space and observe social distancing.</p> <p>Moray Speyside Tourism have been responding and reacting to support the tourism industry and engaging with the communities to reassure the safe opening message. Those businesses who have lost out to funding due to restrictions on eligibility criteria can now be identified and supported</p>	
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	<p>accordingly. They are optimistic for the future.</p> <p>We need to understand the short/medium/long term needs and give all businesses in crisis what is required to survive the next couple of months. Business Gateway are working with those in crisis. Overall many are resilient and there does not appear to be large amounts of debt. Although reports show that Moray has a higher level of sectors most affected by Covid, there is optimism that Moray has many larger organisations who employ greater amounts of people, especially the MoD who have a guaranteed income.</p> <p>Dates announced for recovery phase start to give a bit of certainty but are caveated. Actions to take over the next 3 months will be reactive/proactive so any publication of guidelines cannot be published until something concrete is agreed.</p> <p>It was suggested that Moray Chamber could assist with some sector workshops to identify 3 priorities for immediate needs in the short term. There is an appetite to establish an e-commerce site to allow all businesses to get online.</p> <p>Action: Moray Council, HIE and Chamber of Commerce to facilitate workshops to identify immediate needs</p>	<p>JG/SB/SM</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Minutes of last meeting</p> <p>All agreed</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Recovery Plan Programme and Analysis Update</p> <p>The Council Renewal and Recovery Framework which now has approval for community engagement will need to be harmonised with the Moray Economic Recovery Strategy and Programme. The objective of the Recovery Plan, that sets out the visions and principles of a recovery, is to speed up the recovery to enable implementation of the MES. Members are encouraged to proactively concentrate on the renewal strategy at this time. Suggested that transformation is required to work out of the recession.</p> <p>Business Impact Survey to gather comparable data and analysis will be carried out by Moray Council in July. It should be able to identify impact and the needs going forwards to aid recovery. Working with partners to get the widest survey returns and wider consultees, the Recovery Action Plan should be approved by September.</p> <p>Pressing for Growth Deal Heads of Terms to be signed virtually to allow projects to act as a stimulus. Projects that can be advanced are to be pushed</p>	

	<p>through the Growth Deal processes more quickly.</p> <p>Feedback received from the letter sent from Cllr Leadbitter to Finance Secretary, Kate Forbes.</p> <p>Action - Moray Council, Moray Chamber of Commerce and partner agencies to coordinate online survey to be easily accessible</p>	JG/SM
4.	<p>Visit Scotland Presentation (Jo Robinson – Regional Director, Visit Scotland)</p> <p>Visit Scotland are responding and adapting to the new environment, working with partnerships on the ground to alleviate any concerns and welcome visitors. The re-opening message is targeted towards Moray residents to stay local and support local to make a big difference initially. They are releasing their Moment for Change campaign to promote lesser known areas where Moray - Speyside could benefit into Phase 3 of recovery.</p> <p>During Phase 4, from August onwards, the climate is very much dependant on international travel restrictions being lifted but conscious of a responsible and phased return.</p> <p>VS have carried out case studies in consultation with communities to have an active involvement in how to welcome back tourists and working with activity providers to develop digital platforms to enable visitors to book online. There is a concern that those with no online presence will fall behind.</p> <p>There is a need for a coordinated approach to opening particular tourist 'hotspots', such as distillery visitor centres, who do not have the capability to adopt social distancing, and offering alternative outdoor attractions.</p> <p>Drawing up a charter for both industry and visitors to work together to recognise the principles to abide by. VS are carrying out a survey to see how implementable it is for people to be providing names and phone numbers when visiting pubs/restaurants, etc.</p> <p>Engagement with Community Planning groups to coordinate opening and reinforce the message for consumer confidence at all levels.</p>	
5.	<p>Proposed review of Moray Growth Deal Programme Board</p> <p>The Board was set up for whole scale negotiations and each project to be represented on the Board, although still waiting for Heads of Terms to be signed. MEP will have an oversight of this and Senior Responsible Officers (SRO) around the table will have the expertise to deliver effectively. It was suggested that there should also be engagement of the business community at the right level once the HoTs signed.</p>	

	<p>The Business Assembly acts as a sounding board to keep everything on track.</p> <p>Action – JG to take motion to Business Assembly to decide on whether additional members ought to be represented.</p>	JG
6.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Climate Change draft report out for consultation soon. GL announced large scale grants available.</p> <p>Clarity on the actions and plans for board members before the next meeting. SM and JG to liaise for action points sector by sector.</p> <p>Tourism Scotland and Moray Speyside Tourism working collaboratively with Cairngorm National Park to share their report on increasing confidence. They have had the time to develop a plan for rangers to facilitate a discussion with community leaders. Plans to be individualised for each town/tourist attraction. Other towns are coming forwards with their ideas through Community Planning. TsiMoray may also be able to assist with this and will liaise with Moray Speyside Tourism.</p> <p>Action: TsiMoray to liaise with Moray Speyside Tourism to increase community confidence.</p> <p>Action: SM and JG to liaise for action points sector by sector before the next meeting.</p>	<p>AA/LP</p> <p>SM/JG</p>
	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 29th July 2020 (2:00pm – 3:00pm)</p>	