

## Moray Economic Partnership

### Teams Meeting

Wednesday 26 August 2020 @ 14:00

Graham Leadbitter (Chair)	Leader, Moray Council
Andrew Anderson	tsiMoray
David Patterson	Moray UHI
Dr Jamie Hogg	NHS Grampian
Ewen Mackintosh	Gordon & MacPhail
Jim Grant	Moray Council
John Cowe	Councillor, Moray Council
Katherine Mackintosh	Robertson
Laurie Piper	Visit Moray Speyside
Michael O'Donnell	Moray Council
Pearl Hamilton	FSB
Stephen Sheridan	SDS
Stuart Black	HIE
Tim Eagle	Councillor, Moray Council

### Apologies

Rhona Gunn	Moray Council
Rona Campbell	HIE
Sarah Medcraf	Moray Chamber of Commerce

1.	<b>Minutes of meeting of 29 July</b>  Minute agreed.	
2.	<b>Current Activity update verbal/round table</b> Recent Council led webinars with business forum were very good and town centre businesses provided feedback through to Economic Recovery Plan. GL thanked JG and SB for the presentations they provided for the webinars which were appreciated by the audience.  tsiMoray working on revised outcome framework over the next two years to include leadership, capacity, strategic level and knowledge at sector level. Community officers have presented at community planning groups living examples of depressing stories of suffering and economic restrictions. Cannot stress enough the importance of economic work.  Moray College reopened on 11 Aug with limited staff and no more than 20% building occupancy due to social distancing. However, they are able to continue to deliver education to 94% student population concentrating on skills and apprenticeships.	

	<p>The College, as a business, have also lost commercial income and finished the school year in a deficit position. They are now considering costs. Colleges are anchor organisations and have a big job to do when furlough comes to an end, being prepared to focus on more training and skilling as required, working with JCP and DWP. In the medium term, DP is excited about the signing of the MGD Heads of Terms and projects can begin for the economic future.</p> <p>The Business Forum are going through a review on structure and governance, inviting new companies to become members to contribute and collaborate with the MEP and wider Moray community on recovery and to work in partnership.</p> <p>The recent Business Forum webinar had companies employing between 5000 to 6000 represented and making a major economic impact.</p> <p><b>Action: EM to provide further update on the governance structure of Business Forum</b></p> <p>JH reported it has been a busy and difficult time for NHS. DR Gray's Hospital (DGH) has remained a Covid-free centre and in a stabilised position. A full team of anaesthetists and orthopaedic staff have been recruited with recruitment for emergency medicine and geriatric consultants ongoing. A full set of training doctors are now on site which means the staff team are now stabilised. DGH are working closely with Aberdeen as one organisation with a coordinated approach and it is easier now to attract and employ staff.</p> <p>The Innovation Hub 'Near Me' video consultation and other online consultation platforms have been working well during the Covid situation.</p> <p>The North of Scotland drone service have been flying samples across Scotland and are in discussions with Scottish Government to perhaps branch out to agriculture and fisheries to provide a drone corridor and bring expertise to the North of Scotland.</p> <p>GL welcomed the excellent recruitment news at DGH and acknowledged the benefits of working in the countryside and a lifestyle change has increased levels of interest across all sectors including education.</p> <p>HIE have been dealing with legacy cases of the Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund and have supported a further five companies. Now the MGD HoTs has been signed, HIE are supporting the design and development work for Grant Lodge and the Town Hall with a view to get these going quickly to aid recovery. There are many exciting projects on the horizon and HIE are planning to develop further sites.</p> <p>Despite Covid there is some good news that the growth deal has come to fruition and await the results.</p> <p>The construction industry has still not recovered as many of the Tier 1 level</p>	<p><b>EM</b></p>
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	<p>are mainstream contractors and there is not a lot of work around. Very concerned when furlough ends and redundancies will start. Request to MEP to look at ways to support local procurement and if growth deal projects can be brought forward, this would help construction enormously.</p> <p>Tourism bid invoices were sent out as planned but many in the hospitality industry have not seen a tourist season and have restricted cashflow. Visit Moray Speyside are launching a TV advert next week to promote the region during September, October and beyond. Destination Golf will be running as a month long campaign.</p> <p>The potential of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund would be transformational as we are still trying to help those who have fallen through the gaps. Hotels will require support when furlough ends.</p> <p>The Eat Out to Help Out scheme was good but lobbying to get this extended. 60 businesses have now signed up to the Check and Protect app with one business reporting 1400 check-ins just on one Sunday. Encourage members to promote app as far as possible.</p> <p>FSB reporting many people missing out on grant payments and feel that hands-on support could be more beneficial to smaller businesses looking to upscale IT skills for example.</p> <p>Now children have returned to school, there are a range of SDS staff in multiple premises but hoping all staff to be back in all schools soon. Youth unemployment needs particular support but as we are still in middle of the health crisis, there needs to be medium term solutions and to make sure apprentices complete their courses. Additional PACE support has been stepped up along with the Kickstart financial support. SDS concur there is a considerable challenge in meeting the needs of different groups and to be equipped with staff and resources to help appropriately. SDS are running a workshop in collaboration with Moray College UHI early September and will feed back at next meeting to the economic recovery.</p> <p>Demand for short courses at the college has increased and funding is available for companies and their workforce through DWP/SDS. Once through the health crisis, we will be able to predict better but at the moment, school leavers' futures are unknown and it would be preferable to keep them in a holding pattern in education and knowing what the best provision would be, eg. pathways to apprenticeship.</p> <p>People are reevaluating their lives and realise the benefits of the region. Good timing with the tourism advertising to increase the economy.</p> <p>Agriculture is doing well and prices are slightly up with crops and livestock, however trade at agricultural shows is non-existent and purchases of capital equipment are being affected by Brexit.</p> <p>Scottish Government R100 legal challenge has been concluded enabling the roll out of superfast broadband.</p>	
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3.	<p><b>Economic Recovery: Shortlist options</b></p> <p>JG referred to the shortlists document previously circulated and members were asked to consider the options for support and provide any additional options. The main areas of discussion focused around the following:</p> <p><b>Digital Connectivity</b></p> <p>The Digital Boost funding has been given an extra £1M through Business Gateway and advisory support to get businesses online especially in the agricultural sector. TE felt that although digital support is available, and the farming industry have the capacity to work online they do not have the time to implement it. Some business models have been working well in the past and they just require financial support to be able to continue doing what they have always done to get through the crisis.</p> <p><b>Encouraging Local Procurement</b></p> <p>Local procurement versus best value should be higher on the RAG report as it may not be cheapest option but contributes to the local economy and jobs.</p> <p>Encourage local businesses to be part of the supply chain to offer services to Tier 1 contractors who may not be local.</p> <p><b>Support for Start ups</b></p> <p>Support for new businesses will be advisory and financial. Thoughts on expanding enterprise hubs throughout Moray to Keith and Aberlour for example. Look at exploring a Grampian/Moray ventures capital fund.</p> <p><b>Skill and Retraining</b></p> <p>3000 microbusinesses in Moray and keen to keep skills in the area.</p> <p>Subsidy for training jobs and guarantee programmes working with existing funding.</p> <p><b>Equity Funding</b></p> <p>Suggest that there is little appetite for equity funding and businesses are reluctant to take this option as grants are preferable. Businesses would rather be able to access knowledge and advice as this is more valuable.</p>	

	<p><b>PPE and Social Distancing Support</b></p> <p>EM asked if some of the grants could be consolidated for the provision of PPE for example, however the criteria for application of grants is difficult to impose across the board for all businesses.</p> <p><b>Social Enterprise Development</b></p> <p>The third sector can contribute to growth via one to one contact with development officer or one to many or many to many action groups to assist social enterprise/community support that could be included in the Economic Recovery Plan.</p> <p><b>Transport Subsidy</b></p> <p>Suggested that with the impact of travel restrictions, we should invest more in the High Street which also has an impact on leisure or business visitors.</p> <p>GL concluded the overall shortlist is supported and comments will be fed into the Recovery Plan.</p> <p><b>Action: JG to incorporate comments into the shortlist</b></p>	<b>JG</b>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Growth Deal update</b></p> <p>Great news that the Heads of Terms has been signed this week and press coverage was a positive story for Moray. Four years in the making and the hard work starts now. Projects can progress as quickly as practicable such as the Aviation Academy and cultural quarter which will be of benefit. Project officers assigned and need to sign off OBCs for projects to draw down Government funds</p> <p>Public are interested in the projects that are planned and there is work going on to get information out on the projects as soon as possible. The Growth Deal board has multiple organisations involved, leading on separate projects.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>No other business.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting</b></p> <p>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (2:00pm – 3:30pm)</p>	