

Moray Economic Partnership

Thursday 30 March 2023 – 2.00pm (Teams)

Graham Leadbitter (Chair)	Moray Council
Jim Grant	Moray Council
Chris Muir	Moray Council
Michael Kelly	Moray Council
Marc Macrae	Moray Council
Sandy Keith	Moray Council
David Reid	HIE
David Patterson	Moray College UHI
Gemma Cruickshank	Visit Moray Speyside
Pearl Hamilton	FSB
Sarah Medcraf	Moray Chamber of Commerce
Carol Wink (Minutes)	HIE

Apologies

Rhona Gunn	Moray Council
Andrew Anderson	tsiMoray
Stephen Sheridan	SDS

1.	<p>Welcome The Chair opened the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes from last meeting The Minutes from 7 December and the special meeting held on 17 February were agreed.</p> <p>Update on actions A short-life working group with representatives from a range of organisations including Scottish Government has been set up to develop a detailed business case to evidence demand and capacity issues of childcare provision in Moray. A series of actions are being worked on by the group including a review of Moray Council’s learning estate and the development of two surveys aimed at parents and providers. The group will meet again towards the end of April and will report back to the MEP.</p> <p>Consideration has been given to future marketing activity once the current White Label (WL) contract finishes at the end May 2023. Communications teams across partner organisations should have the existing expertise to straightforwardly pull together a suite of promotional materials to fit the requirement of specific audiences and to develop an overarching proposition to sit on MyMoray.com. An</p>	

	<p>update outlining a plan for future delivery will be presented to MEP members for consideration in due course. There will continue to be a role for MEP members on the communications sub-group and communications will continue as a standing item on the agenda.</p> <p>Other actions from the previous meeting(s) were addressed at relevant stages in the agenda.</p>	
<p>3. MES – Progress</p>	<p>There was a commitment in the Moray Economic Strategy (MES) action plan to establish sub-groups covering Employability & Skills, Business Support, and Communities & Place. These sub-groups have now been formed. The sub-groups also fit in with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) themes.</p> <p>The Employability & Skills sub-group, now well established, have produced their Local Employability Partnership Plan and are already delivering the actions assigned to them within the MES. An update on LEP and the Business Support and Communities & Place sub-groups outlining their plans and timescales for delivery will be presented at the next MEP meeting.</p> <p>Action: Moray Council to provide an update on LEP, Business Support and Communities & Place subgroup plans for activity and timescales at the next MEP meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that the LEP update should be used as a case study to populate the draft reporting template approved at the December 2022 MEP meeting to ensure it provides the correct level of reporting required by the MEP. It is essential to ensure that the sub-groups are aware of the expected timelines for reporting back to the MEP. These timescales need to be communicated to the sub-groups via MEP representatives.</p> <p>Action: LEP to populate the reporting template as a case study to ensure the template provides the correct level of information required by the MEP.</p> <p>Further work is required around aligning skills training to skills needs within business. This issue was raised recently during a hospitality sector event where there was a strong perception amongst businesses that the skills training being provided didn't meet current business requirements. Moray College UHI, with support from Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), have hosted a series of business breakfasts across various sectors and agreed it would be good to combine all feedback gathered.</p> <p>Further conversations with various business sectors need to be held, involving representatives from Chamber of Commerce, Moray Council, Moray College UHI and HIE to gather more information and</p>	

	<p>give assurance to businesses that work is being undertaken to address the issue.</p> <p>An update on the Community Wealth Building Strategy is due to be delivered at the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee early May 2023. This along with the Apprenticeship Strategy, approved in 2022, forms a key delivery mechanism as part of the MES. To assist with the consultation process, an update on the Community Wealth Building Strategy will be delivered at the next MEP meeting. It was agreed that a briefing note is circulated to members prior to the presentation to help them formulate their thinking which will provide a better flow of information and discussion around the subject.</p> <p>Action: Moray Council to arrange for a Community Wealth Building Strategy presentation at the next MEP meeting.</p> <p>MEP members went on to discuss frequency of reporting. Options for a reporting schedule will be circulated to MEP members for consideration prior to the next meeting.</p> <p>Action: HIE to draft and circulate a reporting schedule for members to consider prior to the next meeting.</p> <p>MEP members were reminded that the MES is an evolving document and any changes or updates required to meet partners respective agendas should be incorporated. Any changes made to the document will be presented at a future MEP meeting for consideration and agreement.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Talent discussion paper</p> <p>The draft ‘Moray Economic Strategy – Priority: A Sufficient Labour Market (Talent Attraction and Retention)’ paper was discussed. The aim of the paper is to provide context around the work being done at a national, regional and local level to address challenges and pressures on the labour market and to make some recommendations around specific local actions required.</p> <p>Discussion highlighted, that in terms of talent attraction and population in general, there are various key factors within the infrastructure of any region that are essential to retain and attract people, including housing, transport and connectivity, public/private services such as doctors, schools, childcare, sport, leisure, culture and heritage that makes people want to come and stay in Moray.</p> <p>While all these components are essential, they can’t all sit under one talent attraction plan. There is a need to ensure that all collective components sitting under policies elsewhere come together so they can be fully understood.</p>	

	<p>Moray Council is carrying out a Housing Needs Demand Assessment which will feed into the Local Planning Policy and Housing Strategy. A housing task group is being set up by the Regional Economic Partnership to look at challenges of housing across the highlands and islands, to consider what solutions can be delivered locally and possibly regionally in partnership with other organisations.</p> <p>MEP members to get a brief update on the work being carried out by the Regional Economic Partnership and will be added as a standing item for future MEP agendas.</p> <p>Action: Moray Council to provide an update on work being undertaken by the Regional Economic Partnership at the next and future MEP meetings.</p>	
<p>5. Standing items</p>	<p><u>Moray Growth Deal</u> The MGD annual review has been completed and considered by the Community Planning Partnership.</p> <p>Moray Council delivered a slide presentation reporting on the recent visit by representatives from Scottish and UK Government which gave an opportunity to tour some sites around Elgin earmarked for development and to showcase the Bus Revolution project vehicles and technology. This was followed by a meeting to talk through progress made in 2022 and planned programme for 2023.</p> <p>MEP members were updated on the work being carried out to generate evidence that underpins the projects planned for delivery. The 3 key areas of focus are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme - Robust controls to manage the increased levels of MGD Board activity - key programme and project recruitment <p>When the MGD was signed in December 2021 the Digital Health project was already at delivery stage. Evidence gathering work has been undertaken with clinicians and partners and the project is now at a point where digital development can start.</p> <p>Work continues to address economic cases and undertaking significant stakeholder engagement while making sure the right governance structures are in place for each project as the projects move into Full Business Case stage, approval and then onto delivery.</p> <p>The Digital Health and Bus Revolution projects are already up and running. It is hoped that the remaining projects will have reached Full Business Case stage by the end of 2023 and expected draw-down of funding achieved. Key challenges faced for 2023 include inflation and turnover of staff.</p>	

	<p>It was agreed that a summarised level of engagement would be useful when keeping businesses updated on progress being made with the individual projects. A summarised version of the MGD annual report is being drafted and will be available for circulation in due course.</p> <p><u>Communications</u> WL have been informed that their current contract will not be extended beyond 31 May 2023 but the Communications sub-group will continue to work with them to maximise outputs until the end of the contract. The Jan-Mar 2023 Quarterly Report will be circulated to MEP members for information. Membership of the Communications sub-group will be reviewed to ensure all key partners are involved.</p> <p>Action: The WL Jan-Mar 2023 Quarterly Report to be circulated to MEP members.</p> <p><u>Strategic Funds</u> The list of UKSPF priority projects was presented to MEP (17 February 2023). Applications for the UKSPF priority projects have now been processed by the Economic Development Team.</p> <p>Criteria for the next round of the Just Transition Fund has yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>Moray Council’s Levelling-Up Fund round 2 bid was unsuccessful. Clarification of details and criteria for round 3 are awaited.</p> <p>Indicative regional budgets for the education and skills sector for colleges and universities have still to be announced.</p> <p>Information on grant funding for entrepreneurs with disabilities will be circulated when available.</p> <p>Action: An update on HIE’s Strategy and budgets to be provided at the next meeting.</p>	
<p>6. AOB</p>	<p>Any update papers from MEP partners, in addition to the public sector updates, were welcomed for future meetings.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and brought the meeting to a close.</p>	
<p>7. Date and Time of next meeting(s)</p>	<p>Thursday 29 June (2:00pm – 4:00pm) Thursday 28 September (2:00pm – 4:00pm) Thursday 14 December (2.00 – 4.00pm)</p>	

	ACTIONS SUMMARY	
	Moray Council to provide an update on LEP, Business Support and Communities & Place subgroup plans for activity and timescales at the next MEP meeting.	TMC
	LEP to populate the reporting template as a case study to ensure the template provides the correct level of information required by the MEP.	LEP (TMC)
	Moray Council to arrange for a Community Wealth Building Strategy presentation at the next MEP meeting.	TMC
	HIE to draft and circulate a reporting schedule for members to consider prior to the next meeting.	HIE
	Moray Council to provide an update on work being undertaken by the Regional Economic Partnership at the next and future MEP meetings.	TMC
	Regional Economic Partnership update to be presented at the next MEP meeting and added as an agenda item for future meetings.	TMC
	A Word version of the Talent Discussion Paper to be circulated to MEP members to enable their input to the document.	HIE
	The WL Jan-Mar 2023 Quarterly Report to be circulated to MEP members.	TMC
	An update on HIE's Strategy and budgets to be provided at the next meeting.	HIE